UNIT 1 LANGUAGE VARIATION - THE CONTEXT OF SITUATION

Structure

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1.0 OBJECTIVES

Our aim in this Unit is to make you understand the field of stylistics in terms of fundamental questions, such as

1) What is language?
2) The nature of language variation: dialect, style, register.

In other words, we are placing **stylistics** in the context of the situation

1.1 INTRODUCTION

What is stylistics? It is a study of languages used for a particular purpose, generally for a literary purpose, though it is of course possible to do a stylistic analysis of the language used in advertising, or even in casual conversation. Stylistics is an attempt to characterise the nature of the linguistic features occurring in a particular piece of text (whether spoken or written, though usually the implication is written text). A piece of writing is distinguished from other pieces of writing, not only because of its content, or what it is trying to say, but by how it is said, that is, by the choice of linguistic features, and how these are arranged in the text. Stylistics is concerned with analysing the choice of linguistic features and their arrangement in the text.

But before we embark on a study of stylistics, it is important to begin right at the beginning – with the fundamental questions : **What is language**? A lot of what is discussed in this unit will be repetitive – but it is essential to our discussion, and will help you understand the concepts better.

1.2 WHAT IS LANGUAGE?

The concept of what language is has to be closely linked with what it means to know a language. Knowledge of a language, or language proficiency can be thought of in terms of the distinction between 'competence' and 'performance' made by Chomsky. Competence relates to the potential for language ability that the child is born with and

which matures with age. Performance is the expression of this language ability in actual speech and writing.

Competence, being concerned in essence with the ability on the part of the child to produce language as such, is thus, when the competence is narrowed to the knowledge of one specific language, further narrowed down to the representative forms of that language, namely, the standard dialect, or the standard version of the language. Thus, knowledge of the language is knowledge of its standard version. This version is what is codified in dictionaries and grammar books, and is the form used for wider communication.

Secondly, the notion of competence is basically linked with knowledge of syntax, for syntax is the backbone of language. The realm of syntax is the simple sentence, within which operate all the aspects of syntax. The relationship of one sentence to another, to the paragraph in which it occurs, and the total text of which it is a part is not the concern of syntax.

Thirdly, competence relates to **potential for use**, not use itself. Thus, it leaves out of consideration a major aspect of language in use, namely, the use of language in context. Since the only form of language that language users know is language in context, any theory of language which ignores this aspect of language in use cannot be entirely satisfactory.

Shortly after the Chomskyan revolution, sociolinguists like Gumperz, Ferguson, Fishman and so on, became aware that merely the theory of language without the use of that language was not of much value, and hence they insisted that at the very least, any notion of language must include i) non-standard forms of the language, ii) the linguistic context in which it appears and, iii) the speech context in which it is used. Thus language was made to move out of its ivory tower of the isolated sentence into the hurly burly of life in the marketplace. Speech and writing, as they actually occur in their linguistic and sociolinguistic context, and in the dialect / style/ register in which they occur was now to be considered language. Control of all these aspects was considered to give rise to 'communicative competence'. Thus, there is a marked distinction between the concepts of 'competence' (linguistic; sentence-based; based on standard variety of language) and 'communicative competence' (sociolinguistic; text- and context-based; based on different varieties of the language).

1.3 LANGUAGE VARIATION

What are these different varieties of individual languages?

Linguistic conventions develop in different social groups, and these serve to separate one language from another. But, over the years, as social groups migrate and change their cultural characteristics, the language spoken submits to change and variation. Linguistic change can also be of another kind - language variation down the centuries. This variation can be 'synchronic' (variation within one time period, in terms of region, class or caste) or 'diachronic' (variation due to time factors).

We are aware of the **diachronic variations** of English. For example, the English used by Chaucer differs radically from that used by Milton and both these are different from that of T.S. Eliot. However, many of us are not aware of **synchronic variation.** Look at the following specimens, all of twentieth century English :

1. "Not me," Lump says, "Jedge tole me ef I get caught swipin' any more stuff out'n stores, he'd send me to state's prison sure 'nough" (an uneducated American dialect)

2. Dickie : 'I'm on mother's side. The old boy's so doddery now he can hardly finish the course at all. I timed him today. It took him seventy-five seconds dead from a flying start to reach the pulpit, and he needed the whip coming round the bend----------'

   (Dickie, an adolescent (hence the slang) in Terence Rattigan's play 'The Winslow Boy')

3. Let us propose, then, as a tentative hypothesis, that a great many items appear in the lexicon with fixed selection and subcategorization features, but with a choice as to the features associated with the lexical categories noun, verb, adjective. (Chomsky: technical writing in linguistics)

4. There the smoke of the camp was redolent with the scent of burning gum leaves, there was the splash of the lizard taking to its water, the twittering birds in the trees (literary prose)

All the above are samples of twentieth century writing, yet they vary considerably in terms of the social class of the speaker, his age, the region he comes from, and the type of register he is using, whether literary, technical or otherwise. **These distinctions involve synchronic variation**, which is of three kinds: variation of Dialect, Style, and Register.

1.3.1 Dialect

Dialects may be i) regional or ii) social class/ caste varieties of a language. British and American English are regional dialectal varieties, just as within Britain, also, there are numerous dialects of English- the Lancashire dialect, the Scottish dialect, the Yorkshire variety and so on. The flower girl in Shaw's *Pygmalion,* for example, uses the Cockney dialect :

" There's menners f'yer ? Teoo banches of voylets tred into the mad"

Dialectal differences may be phonological, morphological, syntactic or lexical in nature. For example, a feature of the phonological difference between General American English and British R. P. (Received Pronunciation) is the vowel sound in the words 'last' and 'dance' in the two dialects as shown below.

	British R.P.	American English
Pronunciation difference		
last	/la:st/	/læst/
dance	/da:ns/	/dæns/
Syntactic difference:	different from I'll meet them	different than I'll meet up with them
Lexical difference:	petrol	gas
Morphological difference:	dived	dove

Idiolect

We are aware of how any two speakers will differ in their use of English with respect to points of syntax, phonology or vocabulary. For example, some speakers may pronounce 'uncle' as /ʌnkl/, others may say /ʌnkəl/ or /ʌnkil/. One speaker may use 'you know' in each sentence, while another might say, 'See what I mean?', or perhaps no filler at all. The term 'idiolect' is used to indicate the dialect of one person.

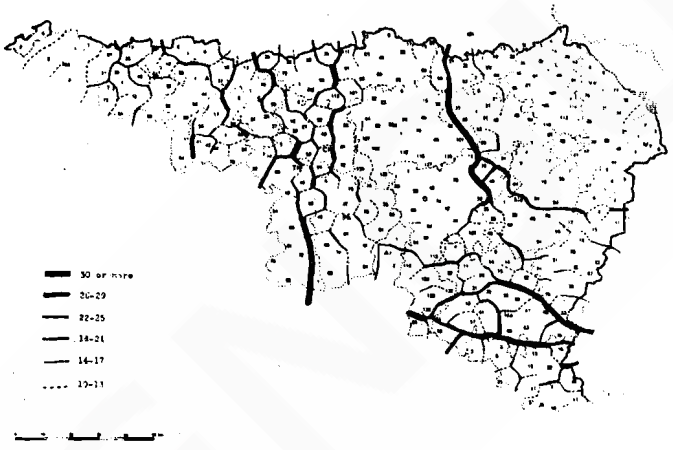
Such differences in phonology, morphology, syntax as they occur in the dialect of specific geographical regions may be marked by what are called dialect boundaries.

Thus in an imaginary state in India where some people use the word 'sigri' for stove and others call it 'sigli', the map may indicate the dialect boundary as follows (where 'x' indicates the use of 'sigri' and 'o' indicates the use of 'sigli':

Isogloss

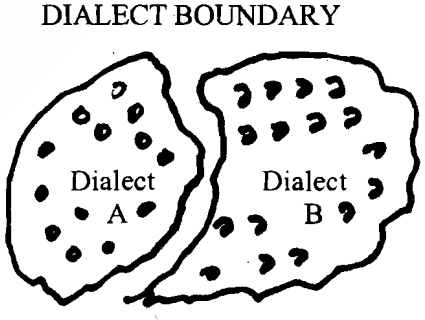
The boundary-line which demarcates the 'sigri' area from the 'sigli' area would be called an 'isogloss'. An isogloss is an imaginary line which divides two areas which differ in the use of a linguistic item.

We can draw a number of isoglosses in a similar fashion indicating other differences, e.g. an initial /s/ and an initial /sh/ in the same word or a terminal /i/ or terminal /e/ in the same word. The isoglosses need not coincide and the map would show a criss-cross of isoglosses as follows:



Bundling of isoglosses

Somewhere in the middle, a number of isoglosses tend to come together. Such a grouping of isoglosses is referred to as 'bundling'. Such a bundling of isoglosses is generally considered as a dialect boundary, as shown below:



Dialects and Languages

What are the criteria by which we may identify dialects of the same language or distinguish one language as different from another? Why do we say that Bhojpuri and Avadhi are dialects of Hindi and that Punjabi and Hindi are two different languages?

The concept of **mutual intelligibility** is a partial answer. If two speakers of different dialects are mutually intelligible to each other in their day to day communication, then they are speaking the same language. However, this is not a totally valid criterion. Two languages like Hindi and Punjabi may be so closely related that there is bound to be some mutual intelligibility between speakers of the two languages. On the other hand, speakers of two dialects of the same language may not be mutually intelligible as happens in the case of some varieties of Chinese (e.g. Pekingese and Cantonese), as also of Konkani and Marathi.

A dialect is raised to the status of a language through non-linguistic considerations: it gains separate status when it becomes politically and socially powerful.

Haugen (1966) indicates two clearly distinct dimensions involved in the understanding of the terms 'language' and 'dialect': structural and functional dimensions.

The **structural** dimension is descriptive, analysing the structure of languages; the **functional** is concerned with the use the speakers make of the codes , and this falls within the domain of the sociolinguist. In the modern world, says Haugen, " technological and political revolutions have brought Everyman the opportunity to participate in political decisions to his advantage. The invention of printing, the rise of industry and the spread of popular education have brought into being the modern nation-state, which extends some of the loyalties of the family and the neighbourhood or the clan to the whole state. Nation and language have become inextricably intertwined. Every self-respecting nation has to have a language, not just a 'vernacular' or a 'dialect' as a medium of communication, but a fully developed language. Anything less marks it as underdeveloped." Haugen goes on to say that he would rather call underdeveloped languages 'vernaculars' and not 'dialects', because dialects are viable linguistic codes, which are language varieties in their own right, and not at all underdeveloped.

It is, in any case, important to remember that all dialects of a language are equally efficient for purposes of the communication for which they are intended. The dialect which becomes 'prestigious', because it is used by the political leaders and the upper socio-economic classes, becomes the medium of instruction, is used by the press, and for purposes of national communication. Such a dominant dialect can be called the **standard dialect.** However, it is in no way superior to the other dialects, which though non-standard, are not sub-standard in any way. In a village, it might be more appropriate to use the regional variety if one wants to mingle with the people on terms of equality. One of the reasons why the Indian family planning propaganda has failed so miserably in the villages is that speeches are usually made in very stilted, formal language of the standard dialect variety. The regional variety is what would have been appropriate here. For one thing it would have been understood.

Accent

This refers to the peculiarities of pronunciation used by the speaker, or to phonological variations in dialect. Thus, English may be spoken with a British, American or Bengali accent. The standard British accent is known as Received Pronunciation (R.P.). An Indian may speak English with a regional Indian accent or use what has come to be codified as General Indian English (G.I.E.) by Bansal (1969), with pronunciation differences as shown in the examples below:

Word	R.P.	G.I.E.
gate	/geɪt/	/ge:t/
home	/haum/	/ho:m/

1.3.2 Style

Dialectal variation, as we have seen, is governed by differences in social class and region. But linguistic variation can also arise because of the nature of the **speech context** or **social situation**. This type of variation is called 'style'. The same individual has the ability to use different stylistic varieties of the language depending on his/her purpose, or the situation in which it is to be used. Talking to your wife or a friend will be different from talking to your boss. Thus there are formal and informal

the Casual, to the Consultative (Informal), then Formal, and finally Frozen. The more formal the style, the less possibility there is of variation. The extreme of formality is 'frozen' style (e.g. 'Smoking is prohibited'; 'Trespassers will be prosecuted') where the expression is fixed by convention. From the informal to the intimate range, there is scope for considerable variation. We are not required to mind our words so much when speaking informally.

An example of a statement worked through the various styles will make the distinctions clear.

Frozen: Visitors should use the two exits at the rear on their way out.

Formal: Visitors should leave by the exits at the rear.

Consultative: Would you mind leaving by the exits at the rear?

Casual: You could leave by the doors at the back.

Intimate: Out you go by the back door!

Style is required to be appropriate to the speech situation in which the interaction takes place. Various factors are at work to create a speech situation. Firstly, there are the participants in an interaction. The relationship between the participants is of importance. Are they equal in status, or is one considered superior and the other inferior, whether in terms of age, sex, or social status. It may even be that, in the given situation, one person has the upper hand. This factor will affect the language used by the 'superior' and the 'inferior' individuals.

In some situations, the difference is not just of style, but even of dialect or, perhaps, a different language altogether may be required to be spoken by the person perceived as 'lower'. Lower castes, for example, were not allowed to use the upper caste dialect in interacting with the upper caste. They were supposed to indicate their inferiority by using the lower caste dialect. Even if the lower caste person had studied in the city and used the upper caste dialect with facility, on his return to the village, he was expected to return to his old position and signal this by the linguistic code he used. Thus, the distinction between style and dialect is not always clear. It gets blurred in actual contexts of use, where, particularly in multilingual societies, change in style is expressed through change of dialect.

The style of language employed would differ inevitably if a large group was being addressed, or if it was only one or two people. Interaction, moreover, can take place between a person and an unknown group, or a group that is not even present, for example, the readers of a newspaper. Here, again, the style would differ considerably from personal communication, even in writing.

Again, there might be age-based differences in certain cultures and sex-based differences. A younger person might be expected to be more polite than the older one. Similarly, a female, regardless of age, might be expected to be more polite to a male, or *vice versa*.. Recorded conversations or dialogue in novels or plays can provide useful data for study in this regard. Norms of politeness are culture-specific, and emerge clearly in interaction situations.

If the expectations of appropriateness of language vary between the two participants in an interaction situation, then tension can arise. This can be observed in both real life and literary uses of language. Lack of appropriateness can lead to rudeness, whether intended or otherwise. It can also lead to lack of comprehension, when one participant assumes some background knowledge on the part of the other, and this does not actually exist. The presuppositions that are expected are missing. Shared

background knowledge and conventions of what requires to be specified in speech are culturally conditioned.

The second important factor relates to time and place. When and where does the interaction occur? Words used at dead of night might take on a different meaning from the same words spoken in broad daylight. Similarly there are occasions for saying things and changes in venue can affect meaning. Court room discourse, when the lawyer is addressing the judge, necessarily makes different demands on the speaker from a casual conversation in the corridor regarding the same matter, and carries a different associative meaning.

Thirdly, the nature of the topic that is being discussed can affect the type of language used. If it requires intellectual discussion, the style may become formal, but if household matters are being discussed, the style may be casual. A different dialect or even a different language may even be used in these circumstances. In India, many people discuss ideas in English, and household matters in their mother tongue. Certainly, there would be a change in the linguistic style, even if dialect or language change was not used to indicate the change in style.

The medium of the discourse, that is, whether speech or writing, can also determine style. A personal letter will be different from a face-to-face interaction, even though the participants and the topic remain the same. Writing does introduce a greater degree of formality than speech. Style varies also according to the mode of the interaction, e.g. telephone conversations, radio and television shows. In the last two modes, the style may again vary depending on whether the show is a newscast, a chat-show, a documentary or a pot- boiler. In the written mode, telegraphic messages, personal/ business letters, newspaper articles or scientific treatises will all use different stylistic varieties of the language.

Register

Register refers to linguistic variation determined by subject matter, e.g. scientific writing is a register which is distinguished by the increased use of the passive voice, formulae, technical terminology, etc. For example:
"Neuraminic acid in the form of its alkali-stable methoxy derivative was first isolated by Klenk from gangliosides and more recently from bovine sub-maxillary gland mucin and from a urine muco-protein, its composition being C H NO or perhaps C N NO."

Again, the peculiarity of a piling up of adjectives, strings of prepositional phrases, and relative clauses, even though the information so conveyed is frequently not properly relevant to the rest of the discourse, is common to the register of Journalism. For example:

"Mr. John William Allaway, a 46-year old plumber, his wife , Florence, aged 32, and their 15 year old son John, escaped unhurt in their nightclothes after a fire broke out at their 200 year old home, Rose Hill Cottage, at Gallows Hill, King's Langley, Herts."

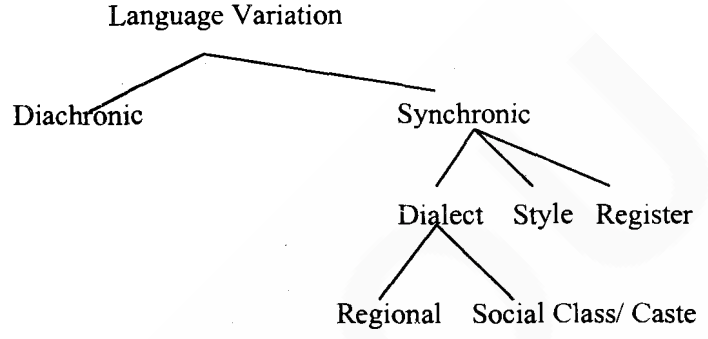
Literary register, on the other hand, is distinguished by its "precision and elegance", to use Quirk's compact phrase, its ability to depict a situation through language that reflects it accurately.

1.4 LET US SUM UP

1. Language can be thought of as a set of linguistic patterns or structures. The field of the operations of linguistics is the simple sentence, isolated from the context in which it occurs. It is also the study of the 'ideal' language, i.e. the

standard version of the language. This is the Chomskyan view of language. The development of sociolinguistics led to an alternative view that is very different. This is that language is basically text- and context-based, and takes account of language variation.

2. Language structure tends to change or introduce variations over time and across space, i.e. both diachronically and synchronically, in response to changing social needs. Language variation may be represented diagrammatically as follows:



3. 'Style' is conditioned by the following components of the speech situation:

a) The nature of the participants
b) Time, place of interaction
c) Topic of conversation
d) Medium, mode of communication

1.5 KEYWORDS

Competence: an abstract idealization of a speaker's knowledge of his/her language, excluding such factors as slips of tongue, memory limitations and distraction.

Performance: The actual linguistic behaviour of particular individuals on particular occasions, including any hestitations, memory lapses, slips of the tongue, etc.

Communicative Competence: The ability to use a language appropriately in social situations.

Accent: a particular way of pronouncing a language.

Style: any particular and somewhat distinctive way of using a language.

1.6 QUESTIONS

Answer briefly in about 50 to 100 words:

(1) What is meant by 'competence' and 'performance'?
(2) What are the three ways in which linguistic competence is characterised?

(3) What is 'communicative competence'? What are the three ways in which it is a break away from the notion of competence? Why is this concept importance?

(4) What are the two kinds of language variation? Exemplify these.

(5) Explain briefly how a dialect boundary is determined .

(6) Distinguish between dialect and language . How does a dialect achieve the status of 'language'? Explain briefly.

(7) What is meant by 'non-standard' dialect ? How does it relate to a 'standard' dialect?

(8) What are the three main types of synchronic variation? Define them briefly.

1.7 REFERENCES

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UNIT 2 THE CONNECTION BETWEEN LINGUISTICS, LITERARY CRITICISM AND STYLISTICS

Structure

2.0 Objectives
2.1 Introduction
2.2 Linguistics and Literary Criticism
2.3 Stylistics
2.4 Let Us Sum Up
2.5 Key Words
2.6 Questions
2.7 Reading List

2.0 OBJECTIVES

The aim of the unit is to show you the relationship between linguistics, literary criticism and stylistics.

This will help you understand that linguistics and literary criticism are not rival disciplines, but in fact have a close relationship with each other. In fact, the interrelations between the two fields have given rise to the discipline of **Stylistics.**

2.1 INTRODUCTION

First we must ask ourselves the question, 'what is linguistics?' Linguistics may be briefly defined as the scientific study of language within the realm of the sentence. It can be divided into different branches, namely, Phonetics and Phonology; Morphology and Syntax; and Semantics, and each of these areas contributes to our understanding of how language works.

But as we have seen earlier, language is not restricted to the sentence. It operates not only in the purely linguistic sphere, that is the sentence, but also in text/ discourse (that is the linguistic context, which may be larger than the sentence, and sometimes smaller than the sentence) and also in the speech context, or the social situation in which speech occurs. This last comprises the participants in the communication, the place and time of interaction, the topic, medium, etc. Thus, linguistic, textual and sociolinguistic factors are all required in order to understand the nature of language. In addition, there is the psycholinguistic aspect which is involved in the processing of language in the minds of the speaker and the listener. Language is not then, a purely linguistic artifact, but a process of communication between human beings in a linguistic and speech context.

Let us see how language functions as a tool of communication. Any act of communication begins as an experience or a message in the brain of the speaker/ writer. In order to communicate this experience, words or sentences (which are in fact sequences of sounds) are uttered/ written. The listener who knows how to interpret these sound sequences, or the reader the graphological message and capture the experience which the speaker wants to communicate. Language is, therefore, a system that mediates between the world of sound/ script and the world of experience.

2.2 LINGUISTICS AND LITERARY CRITICISM

Let us see how linguistics relates to literary criticism. We are all aware that language is the stuff of which literature is made, whatever be the literary genre concerned, novel, drama, poetry. Linguistics describes the system underlying language use, while literature makes use of the relevant aspects of these linguistic features to express what the writer has to say. Thus, a study of the linguistic features concerned in a particular literary text will shed much light on the feelings or ideas the writer wishes to express. The distinction between linguistics and literature can also be expressed with reference to the Swiss linguist de Saussure's distinction between 'langue' and 'parole'. Linguistics could be taken as a parallel to 'langue' or the code, or system of rules common to speakers of a language (say, English), while literature could be parallel to 'parole' or the particular uses of the system made by language users on specific occasions. Literature is, thus, the creative use that the poet, novelist or dramatist makes of the language.

We have seen that language is not only a linguistic system: it is used for purposes of communicating a specific message to a participant in the speech situation. The real life speech situation has its own parameters, as seen earlier, and the language used has to be appropriate to that context. Literature recreates life, and therefore reflects real life speech situations. But literary situations, however realistic, are ultimately figments of the imagination of the writer. In real life, we can say along with Shylock, 'If you prick us, do we not bleed?'. In a novel, the character does not actually bleed. In a dramatic performance, the character does not die, he only acts as if he has died. Again, it is not possible to save Desdemona from death on the stage. Even if you rescue the actress, Desdemona cannot be saved. The literary situation, therefore, is different from the everyday situations of life.

Literature can, therefore, be considered to reflect life, and simultaneously create a world which is separate from that of reality. It is a world, which though analogous to that of reality, is still separate from it. The conventions of speech interaction apply to literature, but it can free itself from these shackles by a variety of means, primarily, the use of metaphor. Thus Wilfred Owen can say,

> 'I am the enemy you killed, my friend'

In terms of real life, this is a meaningless utterance. The use of the words 'enemy' and 'friend' contradict each other. Secondly, the speaker is already dead, and can therefore, not be in a position to speak. However, as a line in Owen's poem, it is very effective and meaningful, because it brings in dimensions of life that are not confined to the literal, surface reality.

Commenting on the relationship between the two disciplines, literature and linguistics, G N Leech writes:
"By popular definition, literature is the creative use of language, and this in the context of general linguistic description can be equated with the use of unorthodox or deviant forms of language." Literature, therefore, contains additional dimensions of meaning and aesthetics, which do not figure in the world of linguistics. Linguistics, however, helps in analyzing the meaning and effect of style in literature in more objective terms such as word forms, sentence structure, syntax, sound sequences, etc. Prior to the application of linguistic analysis, literary style was appraised only subjectively, not on the basis of concrete or objective criteria.

The influence of linguistics on stylistic analysis is of recent origin: " ...a discipline has to attain a degree of maturity and confidence before it can profitably take into its ken a type of material guaranteed to produce exceptions to rules of general

application" says Leech. It is interesting to review the evolution of criticism and its gradually growing concern with the language of literature in Britain. The importance of linguistic description seems to be a growing factor within the special purview of literary criticism.

Roger Fowler (1971) describes this in an essay entitled '*Criticism and the language of literature: some traditions and trends in Great Britain.*' "A work of literature", he says, "is usefully considered as a verbal structure, whatever else it may be. This verbal structure may be described." Though description and criticism have different goals, yet, "criticism in this century in terms of most theoretical and practical efforts has entailed the activity of description. 'Objectivity' is a desirable attribute in the modern scientific age: hence the willingness of the 20th century to accept the label 'descriptive criticism' as a shorthand indication of what it is doing."

While accepting the importance of evaluation, R. A. Sayce (1953) had remarked, "The critic's first and most important task must be to discover, as far as he is able, the objective characteristics of the work under consideration." The characteristics he had in mind were aspects of the language, syntax, sound patterns, etc. At the turn of the century, T.S. Eliot (1923) (cited in Fowler, 1971) had objected to two major failings of critics:

1) Literary criticism had become an emotive response to a stimulus: it had degenerated into an art of persuasion, an art founded on oratory.
2) Criticism lacked a significant and shared critical vocabulary. The critic refused to analyze, to say how, in terms of his perception of the verbal text, he made his evaluation.

Richards in his two seminal works on Criticism aimed, as Tillyard puts it, "firstly, to supplant the easy-going and vaguely laudatory criticism that was still largely in vogue, by something more rigorous, and secondly, to apply the science of psychology to the process of making and enjoying literature."

In *Practical Criticism* Richards directed his attention to individual poems and tried to provide guidelines for literary analysis through the dissection of isolated texts. Nevertheless, Fowler feels that " the ends to which the detailed scrutiny is addressed as well as the terms and assumptions it employs, suggest a distinctly non-cognitive and non-verbally directed quality". In fact much of English literary criticism since Richards, he says, displays fundamentally affective and emotional tendencies, if not moralistic tendencies, for which "the terms of descriptive criticism function as a screen of pseudo-objectivity."

Richards, nevertheless, is deemed to be the father of modern critical theory There are two major reasons for this. He wished to professionalize literary criticism and discourage irresponsible forms of amateur criticism, and to this end he concentrated on practical criticism. Simultaneously, however, he raised the theory of literary criticism to a new level of seriousness with his concentration on the textual features of analysis.

Inspired by him, the next generation of literary critics (the New Critics) came up with a battery of concepts for the analysis of text, e.g. Empson's 'ambiguity', Brookes' 'paradox', and Blackmure's 'gesture' and 'irony', 'tension' and 'dramatic structure'.

However the terms needed to be 'more' concrete than merely vaguely deferential to the sense of complexity, the multi-levelled meanings, in literature. The terms "had to be given meaning by a sensitive insight into the way language works. Richards' dogmatic linguistic categories could not impart meaning to a descriptive terminology." (Fowler 1971)

Empson's *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (1930) became the major and continuing stimulus to descriptive criticism in England. In an argument for the rational analysis of poetry, Empson says,

"Unexplained beauty arouses an irritation in me. The reasons that make a line of verse likely to give pleasure, I believe, are like the reasons for anything else, one can reason about them...." Empson's contribution has been in terms of his focus on "the words, the sentences, the syntax, the metrical structure of poems, of meanings from the near equivalence of two shades to the stark opposition of contraries. " (Fowler 1971).

For Donald Davie, twenty-five years later, the linguistic world of poetry is a syntactic world, and he helped to make syntax the focus of literary criticism. His confidence in the domination of style by syntax is evident in his generalization "what is common to all modern poetry is the assertion or the assumption (most often the latter) that syntax in poetry is wholly different from syntax as understood by logicians and grammarians. When the poet retains syntactic forms acceptable to the grammarian, this is merely a convention which he chooses to observe (Davie, 1955. *In Articulate Energy: An Enquiry into the Syntax of English poetry*)

Winifred Nowottny (1962) talks of literary form and the necessity to ground literary criticism on verbal analysis. "In considering the language of poetry", she says, "it is prudent to begin with what is 'there' in the poem - 'there' in the sense that it can be described and referred to as inarguably given by the words" (*The Language Poets Use*: I)

Thus, says Fowler, " whenever one begins an analysis of a poem, one is going to be led off into other corners, detect new relations between elements, interpret details in the light of unique confrontations of linguistic levels." An explication of syntax leads to discussion of metre and meaning.

David Lodge's book *Language of Fiction* (1966) emerged from substantially the same critical and linguistic background as Nowottny's. Lodge recognized that stylistic description had its limits. By itself it was not capable of carrying the entire burden of criticism. He, therefore, suggests some alternative principles for the evaluation of style in narrative:

a) To isolate deliberately or at random, one or more passages and to exhaustively analyze these (the 'textual' approach).
b) To trace significant threads through the language of an entire novel. (the 'structural' approach).

Subsequent advances in Britain and America are: J. P. Thorne's work in the area of 'stylistics,' generative grammars, M A K Hallliday's article 'Categories of the Theory' (1961) and samples of analysis have been provided by stalwarts like Halliday, Sinclair, and Fowler and more recently, on the area of poetry and fiction by Geoffrey Leech .

2.3 STYLISTICS

The word 'style' has a fairly uncontroversial meaning, referring to the way in which language is used in a given context, by a given person, for a given purpose, and so on. The speaker/ writer makes selections from the linguistic system for the required occasion. However, even in talking about the same topic, for example, the weather, style is dictated by the occasion. Thus, certain English expressions like "bright intervals" "scattered showers" etc. belong to the style of weather forecasts, while

others like "lovely day", "a bit chilly", etc. are expressions used in everyday conversational remarks about the weather. It is the appropriate selection of elements from the total linguistic repertoire that constitutes style.

'Style' can be studied in both the spoken and written varieties of language, whether literary and non-literary. Within the field of literary writing, the term may be used to refer to the linguistic habits of a writer (e.g. the style of Dickens or Proust), or to the way language is used in a particular genre, period or school of writing, or some combination of these, e.g. epistolary style, euphemistic style, etc.

Thus, it is various kinds of literary style that literary criticism seeks to identify and evaluate. Style, according to Geoffrey Leech, is a relational term. We talk about the style of x, referring through 'style' to characteristics of language use. These are correlated with some extralinguistic x, which we may call the writings defined by x (writer, period, etc.), which in turn provide the data that linguistics helps to analyze, in terms of the characteristics of language use.

But in an extensive or varied corpus it becomes difficult to identify a common set of linguistic habits. The small details reflecting a habit of expression or thought may help provide what may be called the linguistic 'thumbprint' of the author. One of the uses of stylistics is the role it can play in establishing the authorship or date of a literary work. Rigorous statistical studies of style are required, concentrating on specific linguistic traits which might be the clue to an author's personal style (e.g. the range of vocabulary, or sentence length, or frequency of certain syntactic features, like conjunctions). This area of study is called **attributive statistics**. This is different from literary stylistics, however, which looks for the correlation between features of language and the meaning that is to be derived.

But, the distinctiveness of personal style should not be over-emphasized. Samuel Johnson uses a different style in the didactic, expository prose of his essays in *The Rambler*, a simpler narrative prose in *Rasselas*, and an informal discursiveness in his private letters. Therefore, it can be said that Johnson has several styles, and not just one that reflects his personality. Consider that if it is difficult to generalize about the style of an author, how much more difficult it becomes to generalize about the style of a genre or an epoch. The more general the domain, the more selective and tentative are the statements about its distinctive style. It is only in a text, whether considered as a whole or in an extract, that we can get closest to a homogenous and specific use of language. Even in a text like a novel, however, the author's style in his commentary may differ from the voices of his characters.

However, we do not study style for its own sake. We study the style of a work because we want to explain some aspect of its meaning, and, to consider how the style brings out its meaning. Thus the linguistic question is – why does the author seek to express himself here in a particular way? From the critic's point of view the question is, "how is such and such an aesthetic effect achieved through language?"

The aim of literary stylistics, therefore, is to relate the critic's concern about aesthetic appreciation with the linguist's concern regarding linguistic description. The tussle between the linguist and the literary critic thus gets reduced and in the last two or three decades we have had more and more linguists turning to literature to study the rich and individualistic (often, deviant) ways in which language is used. As he proceeds with the analysis of the literary text, the linguist forms his/her own subjective, emotive impressions, and does not only bring a clinically antiseptic attitude to his/her reading. On the other hand, as we have seen in an earlier section, literary critics have felt the need for bringing in greater objectivity, through the use of linguistic analysis, into their aesthetic appreciation and evaluation of a literary text.

A question often asked in this connection is, at which end do we start our literary criticism - the aesthetic or the linguistic? But a hard and fast rule is not the answer to

the question. The image used by Spitzer of the 'philological circle of understanding' is more appropriate as represented below.

Spitzer argued that the task of a linguistic-cum-literary explanation proceeds by means of a movement to and from the linguistic details to the literary centre of the writer's art. In the cyclical motion that results, linguistic observation stimulates and modifies literary insight, and then, literary insight, in its turn, stimulates further linguistic observation. There is no logical starting point since both the literary and the linguistic parameters, however imperfectly developed, are brought simultaneously into operation. The cyclical motion between theory formulation and theory testing brings out the scientific nature of the method.

2.4 LET US SUM UP

To summarize briefly, we have seen in this section how with the gradual maturation of the discipline of linguistics, it has come to play an important role in literary criticism. It has given rise to the field of stylistics where the rivalry between the linguist and the literary critic can be gradually eliminated, and in fact, a mutually co-operative role in the field of literary evaluation and appreciation can be established.

2.5 KEY WORDS

aesthetics:	philosophical investigation into the nature of beauty and the perception of beauty, especially in the arts.
literary criticism:	a reasoned discussion of literary works.
ambiguity:	an openness to different interpretations; or an instance in which use of language may be understood in diverse ways.
paradox	a statement or expression so as to provoke use into seeking another sense or context in which it would by true eg. Wordsworth's line 'The Child is the Father of the Man'.
irony	a subtly humorous perception of inconsistency. The straightforward statement or event is undermined by its context so as to give it a very different significance.
stylistics	a branch of modern linguistics devoted to the detailed analysis of literary style or the linguistic choices made by speakers and writers in non-literary contexts.

2.6 QUESTIONS

1. You have read the views of many scholars on the relationship between linguistics and literary criticism. Try and cull out your own view in about 200 words.

2. What is style? Does each author have their own personal style? Comment.

3. Would a linguistic description of a literary work give a true picture of the emotion it evokes? Discuss.

2.7 READING LIST

1. Fowler, Roger (ed). (1966). *Essay on Style and Language*. Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, London.

2. Fowler, Roger. 1971. *The Linguistics of Literature*. Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., London.

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UNIT 3 STYLE AND CONTENT

Structure

3.0 Objectives
3.1 Introduction
3.2 Style
  3.2.1 Dualism
  3.2.2 Monism: the inseparability of style and content
  3.2.3 Comparing Monism and Dualism
  3.2.4 Pluralism: analysing style in terms of functions
3.3 Let Us Sum Up
3.4 Key Words
3.5 Questions
3.6 Answers

3.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit, we discuss the three schools of thought, among the theorists of style: the Dualists, the Monists and the Pluralists. We discuss each in detail.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

We have so far seen that Style refers to the way in which language is used in a given context, by a given person , and for a given purpose. We have also seen in how these conditions of context , speaker, purpose and cultural factors have often governed the selection and use of different aspects of a language such as vocabulary, syntax, accent, etc. leading to the evolution of standardized language variations called 'dialects' and 'registers'. Thus we have had, for example, variations of British and American English, registers of medicine and law, and cockney and other accents of speech, and other varieties of styles adopted by the addresser to the addressee. In literature, where the writer is concerned with presenting a 'story' or a 'message' through particular characters / speakers in specific circumstances or 'contexts' the writer would need to be a very careful 'manipulator of language to set up what, we shall later explain , is called the 'mock reality'. It becomes important, therefore, for an appreciater of literature to understand how the particular use of language (or style) relates to the 'content' of the mock reality and also how this mock reality is different from the 'real' reality that surrounds us in the world. This leads us to an examination of the relationship between style and content and the various theories that critics have upheld on this issue.

3.2 STYLE

STYLE has commonly been defined as a 'way of writing' or a 'mode of expression'. This has implied a separation between style and content. This tradition of thought , therefore, restricts style to those choices which are choices of MANNER rather than MATTER , of EXPRESSION rather than CONTENT. This approach has been called the DUALIST view. The MONIST view, a theory that began with Aristotle and Plato, makes no distinction in language between form and meaning. In Flaubert's

words : "It is like body and soul : form and content to me are one." A third approach to style is the PLURALIST approach. It holds that style is a choice of language according to the function(s) it is expected to perform. We shall take up these three approaches in turn.

3.2.1 Dualism

DUALISM can be said to be of two kinds

1) **Style as the 'dress of thought'**. (Leech & Short 1981) . While the thought or 'content' remains the same, the words , phrases , language used to 'house' the thought may change without making a difference to the substance or total meaning of the thought. Underlying this idea is a distinction between what the writer has to say and how it is presented to the reader. This metaphor of style as some kind of adornment or covering , though no longer widely current, was commonly in Renaissance pronouncements on style. Alexander Pope's well - known definition of wit was an example:

"True wit is nature to advantage dressed
What oft was thought but ne'er so well expressed"
(An Essay on Literary Criticism)

Such artificial styles were cultivated by Renaissance mannerists like Sydney and Lyly. For example,

As therefore

the sweetest rose hath his prickle,
the finest velvet his brack,
the fairest flower his bran,

the sharpest wit hath
his wanton will and

the holiest head
his wicked way.

While the core idea in the various metaphors is the same--- that every good thing has its weakness or wicked aspect---- the attention of the reader is chiefly drawn to the details of the metaphors, further emphasized by alliteration and parallelistic constructions. Obviously the aesthetic form tends to attract the reader's attention here rather than the meaning. However, the schematism of form cannot be divorced from the schematic relation between the ideas presented.

A converse implication of the 'dress of thought' view is that it is possible to write in a style which is the nadir of plainness and neutrality. Says Wesley :

'Style is the dress of thought, a modest dress,
Neat, but not gaudy, will true critics please,'

The French writer, Roland Barthes has referred to the ' transparency' of classical writing, and has postulated a mode of ' writing at degree zero', which "initiated by Camus's 'Outsider' achieves a style of absence which is almost an ideal absence of style". However this is again an extreme view.

French stylisticians have contended that no matter how 'naked, or bare the style may be, there is still an expressive or emotive element of language that gets added to the neutral presentation of language. Thus, Eliza's "Not bloody likely" in Pygmalion by

Bernard Shaw has an expressiveness and , therefore, a style which the otherwise equivalent monosyllable 'No' does not.

Every word has **some** associations---emotive, moral, ideological---- in addition to its brute sense .Even in 'unmarked', 'neutral' linguistic choices, say pronouns, the third person (he, she, they, etc.) may be regarded as neutral in narration as compared with 'I' and 'you'. Yet such a linguistic choice may have implications which may be fruitfully examined in stylistics: the third person pronoun, for example, distances the author and the reader from the character it denotes. So it may be safer to say that style is a property of all texts, Texts may differ greatly in their degree of stylistic interest of markedness and some texts may be more 'transparent' than others. But for all practical purposes, the idea of style as an 'optional extra' must be firmly rejected.

2) **Style as a 'manner of expression'** (Leech and Short 1981), is another kind of dualism. This understanding of dualism can be contrasted with monism. This implies that every writer necessarily makes choices of expression. While the substance or 'content' of the thought is the same , the manner of saying it , the words , phrases, language chosen to express it may slightly vary the total meaning. It is in these choices , in this way of putting things that style resides.

The dualist holds that there can be different ways of conveying the same content. The monist holds that this is a mistake, and that any alteration of form entails a change of content.

Style as a manner of doing something is also applicable in fields outside language, for example, sports ,music, architecture. And here, as in language, some elements may be invariant. Thus, in the field of tennis, the rules of the game are invariant but the choice of backhands, forehands, volleys etc. would be variant. Similarly, in literary or other texts while the writer has to adhere to the rules of syntax and graphology etc. , he still exercises choice in the matter of the words on the page. The idea of style implies ,therefore, that the words on the page might have been different or differently arranged without a corresponding difference in substance. Ohmann, in the example, offers the following paraphrase of 'After dinner, the senator made a speech.' :

1) When dinner was over, the senator made a speech.

2) The speech was made by the senator after dinner.

3) The senator made a postprandial oration.

However, Ohmann here concentrates on the grammatical aspect of style where the differences are grammatical rather than lexical except for the Johnsonian flavour of the third sentence. Phrase Structure Rules and Transformational Rules of English Grammar provide a linguistic basis for the notion of paraphrase and hence for the grammar of style. However it may be noted that the lexical choice (postprandial oration) exercised in the third sentence brings in a sense of style by adding a dimension of weight and pomposity to the statement.

But dualism based on the concept of paraphrase often uses the two terms 'meaning' and 'content' loosely and interchangeably. For a more precise distinction , the words SENSE and SIGNIFICANCE may be used : 'sense referring to the basic, logical , conceptual, paraphrasable meaning, and 'significance' to the total of what is communicated to the world by a given sentence or text. Thus in the above example, the third sentence (postprandial oration) carries a 'significance' including the Johnnsonian colour that goes beyond the 'sense' of the earlier two sentences. Dualists see a valid separation of 'sense' from 'significance'. But though they assume that one can paraphrase the sense of a text, they do not treat stylistic choices as devoid of significance : if they did , they would scarcely find style worth studying. An enlightened dualist will search for some significance which can be called

STYLISTIC VALUE in a writer's choice to express his sense in this rather than that way. This view is formalized by Leech & Short in the equation :

SENSE + STYLISTIC VALUE = (total) SIGNIFICANCE

Even a seemingly 'neutral' style may be as much a choice of the writer to express a certain sense as any other choice.

3.2.2 MONISM : the Inseparability of Style and Content

The Dualists notion of paraphrase, that the basic sense of a text can be preserved in different renderings may not be challenged in workaday uses of language. But in literature, particularly poetry, paraphrase becomes problematic. For example, in paraphrasing a metaphor like

Come steeling night

Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day. (Macbeth, III, ii, 46)

do we try to expound the hidden metaphorical meanings, or the surface literal meanings? As Terence Hawker says, " Metaphor-------is not fanciful embroidery of the facts." Metaphor denies us a literal sense and so induces us to **make** sense, i.e. to find interpretations beyond the truth- functional meaning captured by paraphrase.

Stylistic monism , therefore, finds its strongest ground in poetry, where through devices like metaphor, irony and ambiguity, meaning becomes multi-valued , and sense loses its primacy. Rejecting the form-meaning dichotomy, Monism rejected the idea that a poem conveys a message, preferring to see it as an autonomous verbal artefact.' 'A poem should not mean but be,' was Archibald Macleish's extreme statement of this position. Moreover, stylistic monism also finds its ground in prose. Features of poetry are also to be found in the most prosaic of prose, not to mention everyday speech. Some authors have expressed this sense of the artistic integrity and inviolability of their work as in Tolstoy's words : " This indeed is one of the significant facts about a true work of art--that its content in its entirety can be expressed only by itself." Thus the New Critical methods have been applied to prose fiction too. David Lodge in 'Language of Fiction' argues that the following tenets apply to both poetry and prose :

(I) It is impossible to paraphrase literary writing.

(II) It is impossible to translate a literary work.

(III) It is impossible to divorce the general appreciation of a literary work from the appreciation of its style.

It is obvious that both (I) paraphrase and (II) translation if understood as expression of the same content in different words, presuppose a dualist philosophy.

A third case for style adopts a monist approach, heralding the view of the New Critics that criticism is in essence language criticism. This approach has gained momentum over the last 40 years. With regard to criticism of prose fiction too, it is upheld that there can be no separation of the author's creation of a fiction of plot, character, social and moral life, from the language in which it is portrayed. The mock reality is entirely based on the words of the text. As Lodge says the novelist's medium is language: whatever he does, he does in and through language. It is the phonological, emotional and cultural dimensions too of the particular words in the text that contributes to the total significnce of the textual extract which thus gains stylistic value. All the choices the writer makes are, therefore, equally matters of language.

3.2.3 Comparing Monism and Dualism

Simply put dualism is happier with prose and monism with poetry, But as has been indicated earlier, the real situation is much more complex. The difference between prose and poetry at its most banal level is defined by the absence or presence of verse form. But a lot of prose can get poetic and poetry may be read prosaically.

The Prague School of Poetics has distinguished the 'poetic function' of language by its FOREGROUNDING or DEAUTOMIZATION of the linguistic code. This implies an aesthetic exploitation of language which takes the form of surprising the reader into a fresh awareness of and sensitivity to the linguistic medium which is normally taken for granted as an automatized background of communication. Thus consider the following extract from James Joyce :

" Once upon a time and a very good time it was there was a moocow coming down along the road and this moocow that was coming down along the road met a nicens little boy named baby tuckoo---

His father told him that story: his father looked at him through a glass: he had a hairy face.

He was baby tuckoo. The moocow came down the road where Betty Byrne lived: she sold lemon platt. "

The foregrounding here is not limited to the more obvious poetic devices, such as metaphor and alliteration. It denies the normally expected clues of context and coherence. Joyce confronts us with a piece of apparently inept, uncontextualized, childish language lacking normal 'prosaic' logical transitions and so shocks us into a 're-experience' (rather than a reminiscence) of a childhood consciousness. This renders what may be called an OPAQUE quality of prose style where the medium attracts attention in its own right, and interpretation of sense may even be frustrated and obstructed by abnormalities in the use of the lexical and grammatical features of the medium. On the other hand, in a TRANSPARENT quality of prose style, the reader need not become consciously aware of the medium through which the sense is conveyed to him. Here is a more transparent version by Burgess of the Joyce extract quoted above :

"My earliest recollections are of my father and my mother bending over my cot and of the difference in personal odour that subsisted between my two parents. My father, certainly did not have so pleasant an odour as my mother. I remember I would be told infantile stories, altogether appropriate to my infantile station. One of them I seem to recall, was concerned with a cow coming down the lane---which lane was never specified---and meeting a child who was called (I am embarrassed , inevitably to recollect this in maturity) some such name as Baby Tuckoo. I myself, apparently, was to be thought of as Baby Tuckoo. Or was it Cuckoo? It is, of course, so long ago....."

Thus a writer in breaking or bending the normal rules of syntax, graphology etc. does so because it is a part of the formulation of the 'new' experience of the author which thus gets transmitted to the reader with the linguistic medium becoming a part of the experience or the verbal artefact.

3.2.4 PLURALISM : Analyzing Style in Terms of Functions

A third approach to Style is called Pluralism. According to the Pluralist, language performs a number of different functions and any piece of language is likely to be the result of choices made on different functional levels.

Language can perform varied functions. These functions may be

1) referential (e.g. newspaper reports)
2) directive / persuasive (e.g. advertising)
3) emotive or social (e.g. casual conversation)

To this functional variety of language, the pluralist adds the idea that is intrinsically multifunctional. For example:

'Is your father feeling better?' may be simultaneously

a) referential (referring to a person and his illness)
b) directive (demanding a reply from the hearer)
c) social (maintaining a bond of sympathy between the speaker and hearer)

From this point of view the dualist is wrong in assuming that there is some unitary conceptual 'content' in every piece of language.

Pluralists tend to disagree on what the functions are, and even their number. Thus I.A. Richards (1929) distinguishes four types of functions and four kinds of meaning *sence, feeling, tone,* and *intention.* Jakobson's (1961) scheme is based on a more systematic theory of language and distinguishes six functions (*referential, emotive, conative, phatic, poetic, metalinguistic*) each corresponding to one essential aspect of the discourse situation. More recently, Halliday's functional model of language acknowledges three major functions which he calls *'ideational, interpersonal',* and *'textual'.*

The pluralists also tend to disagree on how functions are manifested in literary language. Richards holds that the 'function' of feeling tends to dominate that of 'sense' in poetry. Jakobson identifies a special poetic function which can be found in many uses of language but which dominates over the functions in poetry. Thus these linguists have different listings of functions and also hold different views the 'poetic function'. Halliday does not commit himself to a functional definition of literary language but recognizes that different kinds of literary writing may foreground different functions.

The extract below from William Golding's novel (The Inheritors) deals with the prehistoric struggles for survival between 'homo sapiens' and Neanderthal man , resulting in the latter's extinction. The special Lok- style which Golding uses to present the point of view of Lok, the Neanderthal man gradually shifts in style to the 'homo sapiens' point of view at the end of the novel. These contrasting styles represent primarily the function of language which Halliday calls IDEATIONAL: i.e. the way in which language conveys and organizes the cognitive realities of experience, roughly corresponding to what was earlier called 'sense'.

" The bushes twitched again. Lok steadied by the tree and gazed . A head and chest faced him , half - hidden. There were white bone things behind the leaves and hair..... The man turned sideways in the bushes and looked at Lok along his shoulder. A stick rose upright and there was a lump of bone in the middle. Lok peered at the stick and the lump of bone and the small eyes in the bone things over the face. Suddenly Lok understood that the man was holding the stick out to him but neither he nor Lok could reach across the river. He would have laughed if it were not for the echo of the screaming in his head. The stick began to grow shorter at both ends. Then it shot out at full length again.

The dead tree by Lok's ear acquired a voice.
'Clop!'
His ears twitched and he turned to the tree.

----- Golding (The Inheritors)

Here, we are seeing through the uncomprehending mind of Lok, a man's attempt to shoot with an arrow. Lok's view of things lacks the sense of cause and effect, as descendants of his vanquishers take for granted. This is reflected in the limited grammar of Lok's language, particularly its paucity of clauses with a direct object or clauses with a human subject (e.g. The bushes twitched again, Lok steadied by the tree, The stick rose upright). Again, there are no adverbs or adverbial phrases, except those of time and place. To represent the limited universe of Lok, Golding uses a limited language, particularly in the area of transitivity, (a term which for Halliday comprehends relations between verbs , noun phrases, and adverbials in the clause).

Halliday's view is that all linguistic choices are meaning meaningful, and all linguistic choices are stylistic. Pluralism can, therefore, be regarded as a more sophisticated version of monism. The flaw of monism is that it tends to view a text as an undifferentiated whole and by considering meaning inseparable from form, the monist cannot discuss language at all, for meaning can only be discussed by repeating the very words in which it is expressed. But the pluralist is in a happier position. He can show how choices of language are interrelated to one another within a network of functional choices. The choice a writer makes can be seen against the background of relations of contrast and dependence between one choice and another.

The pluralist therefore has a theory of language whereas the monist does not.

3.3 LET US SUM UP

We have seen that style refers to the argument about choices of manner and expression rather than matter or content. There have been three schools of thought among the theorists of style : the Dualists ,the Monists, and the Pluralists.

One group of Dualists contend that language is used as a dress of thought - when it is fancy it attracts the reader's attention and at its most transparent the degree of style is almost at zero --- in any case the degree of style makes no difference to the thought content. Another group of dualists hold that the choices operate at two levels : choice of content and choice of expression or (style). The concept of 'stylistic value' is brought in to show the difference between 'sense' and 'significance'

The Monists equate the choice of expression with the choice of content and allow no room for paraphrase and translation. It tends to eliminate any discussion of language or style.

Both these schools are based on a simplistic approach. The Pluralists take account of the complexities of literature and its appreciation. It adopts tenets of both the dualist and monist schools. It considers style in terms of the functions of language and accepts that a piece of text can be multifunctional. It distinguishes between 'sense' and 'reference' and also takes account of the variant and invariant factors involved in the choices underlying style. It studies style in terms of 'foregrounding' and 'de-automatization' and helps to a clearer, more objective and convincing analysis of style and literary appreciation.

3.4 KEY WORDS

metaphor: a figure of speech, in which one thing, idea, or action is referred to by a word or expression normally denoting another thing, idea, or action, so as to suggest some common quality shared by the two. In metaphor, this resemblance is assumed as an

imaginary identity rather than directly stated as a comparison: referring to a man as *that pig,* or saying *he is a pig* is metaphorical, whereas *he is a like a pig* is a *similie.*

alliteration: the repetition of the same sounds—usually initial consonants of words or of stressed syllables—in any sequence of neighbouring words: 'Land-scape-love, lord of language' (Tennyson)

parallelism: the arrangement of similarly constructed clauses, sentences, or verse lines in a pairing or other sequence suggesting some correspondence between them. The effect of parallelism is usually one of balanced arrangement achieved through repetition of the same syntactic form; eg

.....
the finest velvet his brack
the fairest flower his bren

foregrounding: giving unusual prominence to one element or property of a text, relative to less noticeable aspects.

referential language: language which aims only to *denote;* for instance, the language of the scientist and the philosopher.

emotive language: language intended to express or arouse emotional reactions towards the subject.

phatic language: exchanges to maintain social communication, for example, about the state of the weather and a person's health.

conative: the function of language by which the speaker tries to get somebody else to do something

ideational function: that part of language use involving information, evaluation and judgements

interpersonal function: that part of language use involving interactions with other people: greeting, persuading, ordering, etc.

3.5 QUESTIONS

1. What is the simple definition of 'Style'?
2. What does the content of literature refer to?
3. What are the three views of the critics about the relationship between style and content?
4. What are the two forms of Dualism? Explain briefly the difference between them.

5. What is the different between 'sense' and 'significance'?
6. What is Monism? In which part of literature does it find its strongest ground? Why/How?
7. Can Dualism and Monism be separated for application to prose and poetry? Why?
8. What is foregrounding?
9. What are the basic assumptions on which the pluralist approach is based?
10. Is pluralism superior to both Monism and Dualism? How?

3.6 ANSWERS

1. Style is the way in which language is used in a given context by a given person and for a given purpose.

2. Content refers to the story or message presented by the writer by using specific characters in specific circumstances. The language chosen for this presentation sets up a mock reality which can be referred to as 'content'

3. a) The Dualist view makes a distinction between what the writer says and how he says it.
   b) The Monist holds that they are inseparable.
   c) According to the Pluralist, the language is chosen according to the functions it is expected to perform in the piece of writing.

4. Dualism: (a) Style as the 'dress of though' view holds that while the core content has 'zero' style value it is 'paraded' in ornamental images / expressions which attract the greater attention of the appreciator of literature.

   Dualism (b) 'Style as a manner of expression' maintains that the same core idea can be expressed in different forms for different effects.

5. 'Sense' refers to the basic conceptual paraphrasable meaning and 'significance' refers to the total effect of the text which goes 'beyond' the basic meaning.

6. (I) Monism holds that style is inseparable from content. 'Sense' and 'significance' blend into one.

   It finds its strongest ground in poetry which is considered largely unparaphrasable or untranslatable.

7. (I) No, because pros can often be poetic and poetry may also be banal prose in verse form.

8. Foregrounding or de-automatisation is the exploitation of language i.e. the bending or breaking of the automatised rules of language to use the phonological, graphological and syntactical resources of language to surprise the reader into a fresh awareness and sensitivity. It shocks him into a 're-experience'.

9. a) Language performs different functions.
   b) A piece of text could be multifunctional.

10. Superior to Dualism :

While Dualism accepts stylistic variants with stylistic values, it does not explain how language creates a particular cognitive view of things. Pluralism, however, holds that language contributes to the entire concept of the content and does not function as a mere dress of thought or a manner of expression.

Superior to Monism

While Monism views a text as an undifferentiated whole of language (style) and content, Pluralism has a theory of language and can show how linguistic choices are inter-related to one another within a network of functional choices. Pluralism, therefore, becomes a more sophisticated approach, much better able to analyze the intricate working of literature and leading to a more enlightened appreciation of it.

UNIT 4 ANALYSING TEXTS-I

Structure

4.0 Objectives
4.1 Literal versus figurative meaning
4.2 Foregrounding
  4.2.1 Foregrounding through parallelism
  4.2.2 Foregrounding through the use of deviant constructions
4.3 Analysis of fiction
4.4 Analysis of poetry
4.5 Let us sum up
4.6 Key words

4.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit we are consolidating the theoretical inputs of other blocks/units to analyse different types of literary texts. We will use linguistic criteria to study these texts.

This unit and the next two do not follow the structure of the earlier blocks — primarily because we are giving you hands on experience in analysing texts.

This kind of analysis will help you in understanding literature better.

4.1 LITERAL VERSUS FIGURATIVE MEANING

Without going into any sophisticated theories of meaning, it is possible to say that meaning is of two basic types: core meaning and implied meaning. The core meaning, as defined here, includes the central but non-figurative meaning, the meaning available on the surface of the utterance, the literal meaning. Some degree of abstraction from facts is required even in arriving at the core literal meaning, but this stays as close to the surface, or to the facts as possible. Implied meaning is based on generalisation or interpretation from facts, such as the thematic content of a literary work. It also involves figurative meaning, such as **metaphor, symbol, irony**, etc.

In ordinary language, as opposed to literary language, it is possible to separate the two types of meaning and talk of literal versus figurative meaning in a way that is not possible in literary texts. In a literary text, for one thing, there are no facts. Everything is a figment of the imagination and has been introduced in order that a certain world-view, or meaning, is brought into being. The better the work, the more will every detail contribute to the development of the theme and the plot, and the more closely will the meaning and the words used to express it be linked. No detail, or any part of the action, can be put in for its own sake. Everything has to have a purpose and nothing inessential can be admitted. The function of stylistics is to yield up the very meaning of the work, its informing principles, its thematic content.

The importance of a fact/ idea/ activity lies not in its objective verifiability, but in the part it plays in developing the whole work. Just by studying the use of pronouns in *Othello*, for instance, we can arrive at an interpretation of the character of the protagonist. The use of the first and third person pronouns by Othello, both used on different types of occasions to refer to himself, can be significant in understanding

how he views his public and private personas (cf. (Widdowson in Carter (ed), 1982). Early on in the play, for example, he speaks of himself thus:

Rude am I in my speech
And little blest with the set phrase of peace. (I, iii, 81-2)
(first person pronoun to refer to himself)

In his last speech he says of himself:

then must you speak
Of one that lov'd not wisely, but too well:
Of one not easily jealous, but being wrought,
Perplex'd in the extreme... (V, ii, 344—7).
(third person pronoun to refer to himself)

An analysis of the play can reveal remarkable consistency in Othello 's use of the first person to indicate his own view of himself as clumsy and unsophisticated, whereas he uses the third person to present the image to the world which he would like perpetuated. "Iago's tactics are to create a confusion of first- and third-person worlds which is a reflection of Othello's own mental disposition. Such a confusion, therefore, provides the conditions in which Othello will reveal his own weakness, the inner uncertainty and doubt that he customarily conceals by the projection of a third-person image." (Widdowson, ibid). **So, even the use of pronouns in a literary text can affect the larger meaning of the whole**.

The language of a literary work thus seems to acquire a special kind of meaning by the context in which it occurs, the context of the world created by the writer. Nothing, therefore, is purely literal, or true, if divorced from its context in literature. However, over and above this, language in a literary work can be figuratively used. The words can be ironic, as in the opening lines of Jane Austen's novel, *Pride and Prejudice*: "It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a large fortune must be in need of a wife." The words are, clearly, not literally intended. Jane Austen is laughing, somewhat mockingly, at the match-making tendencies of society. These words, along with all the other words in the novel, help to create the context, the world-view and the value system operating in the novel. The effect of each line is in its relation to the others, some getting highlighted, the others being subordinated. Every word is there for a meaning, for an effect, and all of them put together create the totality of the meaning.

The writer of a literary work does not directly address an audience - the world of the work is complete in itself, the characters speak to each other, not to the audience. If a writer deliberately steps out of the action and directly addresses his/her audience, some degree of alienation is introduced, that is, the illusion created by the fictional plot is disturbed. But quintessentially, even with direct authorial comment, the text remains intact and closed, so it is possible for MacNeice to say in a poem, "I am the enemy you killed, my friend", or "I am not yet born, O hear me". This is not the writer MacNeice speaking directly to the reader. As far as the literary text is concerned, the participants of the literary discourse are within it, not outside.

The language of everyday use is **basically intended to be taken literally**, and is used to further communication among the participants in an interaction. In order for communication to take place, what is said has to build on the presuppositions and background knowledge of the participants, i.e. it has to be relevant to the context of situation. The language of literature, however, as we have seen, is **basically intended figuratively**, i.e. it has to be interpreted in relation to the organic unity of the whole text. It is possible to posit that a language, such as the language of advertising (as also the language of games, or of humorous anecdotes) can occupy an intermediate position between the language of everyday use and that of literature.

The language of advertising is intended to be persuasive, to create an effect on the mind of the reader which will make her/him wish to buy a particular product. This

striving after a specific effect brings advertising language close to everyday language use, i.e. it is a communication between the sender and receiver of a message. On the other hand, advertising attempts to create a world for its product, and literature also attempts to create its own world, largely through language. For example, the slogan, 'Drinka pinta milka day' can draw on the resources of ordinary language and at the same time use poetic licence because it is not functioning as a part of real life, but instead is creating its own context. The choice of expression in a particular advertisement is based on the norms of appropriateness relating to the context of situation it has created. In this it is similar to both literary language and the everyday use of language.

Literary texts can provide meaning through '**foregrounding**', when some pieces of information are given prominence in relation to other information. The prominent information is said to be 'foregrounded', while the rest is subordinated or 'backgrounded'. The items that are foregrounded stand out and are remembered, while those that are backgrounded, merge into the general scene. What is foregrounded provides the basic focus of the passage and provides logical connections between what comes before and after. In order to establish its importance in the text, it has to be appropriately signalled through linguistic means.

This linguistic indication of prominence, or foregrounding, can be achieved in two ways, through:

1. the creation of rhythmic patterns, or what are termed 'parallelisms', and
2. the use of irregularity in language use, or deviation from the accepted norms of grammar, lexis, phonology.

In the next section we discuss the technique of foregrounding through grammatical parallelism, phonological parallelism and foregrounding through the use of deviant constructions.

4.2 FOREGROUNDING

4.2.1 Foregrounding through parallelism

Parallel constructions are those in which one structure seems equivalent or parallel to another. Constructions can be said to be foregrounded if they introduce extra regularity into the language, that is, regularity which is over and above the demands of correctness. The following are instances of phonological over-regularity: rhyme, rhythm, metre, alliteration (consonant harmony), assonance (vowel harmony).

Parallel constructions which occur in sequence and appear similar in structure usually indicate similarity of meaning. They may, however, signal irony, where similarity of structure gives rise to an expectation of similarity of meaning. In ironical use, this expectation is belied and the meaning of the two structures, instead of being similar is, in fact, opposed.

i. Grammatical parallelism

Let us first consider grammatical structure. This may be at the level of words, phrases, clauses or sentences. The following are examples:

a. 'The poor young man hesitated and procrastinated.' (Henry James: 'The Pupil')
'Hesitated' and 'procrastinated' have roughly the same number of syllables, and are similar in meaning. These words are, thus, parallel constructions.

Co-ordination of two constructions which are parallel helps to reinforce the meaning and give it emphasis in the context.

b. 'As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean' (Coleridge: 'The Ancient Mariner')

The constructions 'a painted ship' and 'a painted ocean' are phrases which are parallel to each other, in terms of the structure, to the extent of being almost identical. They differ only in respect of one word in each of the phrases. The emphasis being placed on 'painted' brings out the unreality of the situation. The words are also ironical in the context of the poem, because a real ship on a real ocean is being compared to something which is painted, and therefore unreal.

c. 'The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew' (Coleridge: 'The Ancient Mariner')

In this case, it is the two clauses, 'The fair breeze blew' and 'the white foam flew' which are parallel to each other, separated only by a comma. They have exactly the same construction, and the meaning is complementary, though not identical. The fact of the repetition of the structure emphasises the pleasantness of the scene and the light-heartedness of the mood. The parallelism also indicates through the rhythm it creates that the regular course of events being described is in accordance with nature at its best.

d. 'I kiss'd thee e're I kill'd thee' (Shakespeare: *Othello*)

Note that 'kiss'd' and 'kill'd' are similar in structure, in fact identical, except for one consonant in each of the two structures. The words are, however, completely opposed in meaning. By using grammatical and phonetic parallelism, however, the act of kissing (love is the essence of life) and the act of killing appear to Othello's tortured mind at that moment as being identical. He cannot live with the kind of love he has: death is the only answer for it.

e. 'Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey
Where wealth accumulates and men decay'
(Goldsmith: 'The Deserted Village')

Note the parallelisms the poet has used to achieve his effects.

i) The use of rhyme, i.e. the use of parallel vowel sounds: *prey, decay*
ii) Parallels in grammatical structure, in this case, two main clauses: 'wealth accumulates' 'men decay'
iii) The repetition of words 'Ill' and 'ills'
iv) Parallels in rhythm: Both the lines have a pause in the middle of the line, though the pause is longer in the first line.

What is the effect of these parallelisms in the last example? The basic idea that is being dealt with is that an increase in wealth leads to a decrease in human qualities. The grammatical parallel in the second line effectively brings out the irony of this statement. The parallel would seem to suggest that the two are similar, that an increase in material wealth would lead to all round prosperity, but this expectation is then dashed to the ground. Hence the irony. Notice the economy with which this idea is brought out: the structure creates the meaning; it does not have to be spelt out further. Also notice that the first line which appears to have two distinct parts, is in fact dealing with one idea, but that idea is being reinforced by repetition. It also forms a fitting background to the second line which is foregrounded by the two parallel constructions. It is the second line which is memorable, because the author

intends it to be foregrounded. Notice also the greater force of 'wealth accumulates' (more high-sounding words) as opposed to 'men decay' (simpler words), which brings out the irony even more clearly. Wealth is given greater status (through the words) but in fact, the author suggests that it is nowhere as important as human qualities.

ii. Phonological parallelism

Parallelism can be at the level of sounds.

a. 'The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew'

- Consonants: the /f/ and /b/ sounds predominate, i.e., there is alliteration, which is a form of parallelism. In addition, there is grammatical parallelism.

- Vowels, diphthongs: the /u:/ as in 'blew' and 'flew' is identical in each, and gives rise to internal rhyme. Rhyme is a form of parallelism. So also is metre. In fact, any form of rhythmic patterning creates parallelism.

- Similarity in vowel sounds, even without giving rise to rhyme, will also create parallelisms.

  e.g. a large number of back vowels (i.e. rounded sounds, e.g. /ou/ or /u/) or

  many front vowels (i.e. vowels produced with spread lips, e.g. /i/, /e/, /æ/).

In all these cases, the parallel constructions build on the potential of the language and create greater regularity in the patterning of language than would normally occur in the flow of ordinary speech. This draws our attention, and such constructions are considered to be foregrounded.

4.2.2 Foregrounding through the use of deviant constructions

Constructions can be said to be foregrounded if they deviate from the rules of normal language, i.e. from the accepted norms of grammar, lexis, or phonology. Let us consider some examples.

a. 'The what of a which of a wind' (e. e. cummings)

where 'what' and 'which' are being made to function as nouns instead of as relative pronouns. This makes the utterance intriguing and mysterious because the change of parts of speech gives new meaning to the words. We feel we are being introduced to a world where everything has a different meaning, we have to look at it afresh. At the same time, the alliteration (an instance of parallelism) suggests that it is a world of lyricism and light-heartedness.

b. 'a grief ago' (Dylan Thomas)

where 'grief' is made to function as if it was a period of time, such as 'a month ago'. Just as we are able to measure out units of time, we now see that we can measure out units of grief. The economy of words in the utterance gives it force and power.

c. '.....and I shall see
Some squeaking Cleopatra boy my greatness
I' the posture of a whore.'

(Shakespeare: *Antony & Cleopatra*)

Notice that the word 'boy' is wrongly used as a verb, when grammatically it is a noun. This has been deliberately done by Shakespeare to present in capsule the idea

of boy actors taking on the role of women on the Elizabethan stage. Again, notice the economy of the utterance.

d. '.....the widow-making, unchilding, unfathering deeps
(Hopkins: 'The Wreck of the Deutschland')

The three adjectives used here are not words of the language. They are words which have been coined for a particular purpose. Though women can be made widows, the compound word 'widow-making' does not exist. Again, the words '*child*' and '*father*' exist as nouns, and '*fathering*' can exist as a verb, but using them as adjectives is grammatically incorrect. Moreover, it is not correct to add the negative prefix '*un-*' to these nouns. Why then has Hopkins violated the rules of grammar? He appears to be doing this in order to emphasise the violence perpetrated by nature on man when it swallows up the steamer, 'The Deutschland', and by doing this, killing husbands, children, fathers. The extent of the violence done to the grammar reflects the magnitude of the violence unleashed by nature.

In the example drawn from Goldsmith, the first line has been backgrounded in comparison with the second line. The examples from Shakespeare and Hopkins present the foregrounded version, i.e. the deviation from the normal, grammatical use of language which forms the background.

It is clear that ordinary language is always the background to literary language, whether the language used in a poem or novel is grammatically correct or not. The language used in poetry is selected from the background of normal language in order to achieve a particular purpose. The language of poetry may, of course, vary from age to age, depending, to a large extent, on the type of language commonly used in that age. So, the Romantics can make a deliberate break from the language of the Augustan period, and T.S. Eliot from the language of the Georgians and the Victorians.

4.3 ANALYSIS OF FICTION

Stylistics is concerned with every bit of language used in a literary or non-literary work, or speech situation. We will, however, restrict ourselves only to the use of language in literary works. There will then be the need to study the choice of every word, phrase, clause, sentence in the work, as well as the relationships between sentences or the type of cohesion and coherence employed in order to make the literary text hold together. We will now look at several passages taken from fiction and analyse them in detail stylistically.

Passage 1

Read the following passage, taken from George Eliot's *Middlemarch*.

S1) Miss Brooke had that kind of beauty which seems to be thrown into relief by poor dress. (S2) Her hand and wrist were so finely formed that she could wear sleeves not less bare of style than those in which the Blessed Virgin appeared to Italian painters; and her profile as well as her stature and bearing seemed to gain the more dignity from her plain garments, which by the side of provincial fashion gave her the impressiveness of a fine quotation from the Bible – or from one of our older poets – in a paragraph of today's newspaper. (S3) She was usually spoken of as being remarkably clever, but with the addition that her sister Celia had more common-sense. (S4) Nevertheless, Celia wore scarcely more trimmings; and it was only to close observers that

her dress differed from her sister's and had a shade of coquetry in its arrangements; for Miss Brooke's plain dressing was due to mixed conditions, in most of which her sister shared.

The first question I would like to ask you, now that you have read the passage, is:

1 What is the passage about?

Many people are likely to answer: i) The two sisters, Miss Brooke and Celia, or ii) The clothes that the sisters wear. And, certainly the passage is about these things. But one must recognise that this is only the surface meaning of the passage. What the passage is in fact about, that is, its deeper meaning, is the character of the two sisters which is being brought out by their patterns of dress. Their personalities are quite different, and the difference emerges through the (minute) differences in their dress. But as both exist within the same social conditions, there is greater similarity than difference in their dress.

2 What can you say about the nature of their clothes?

The clothes of both the sisters are very simple, but even so, Celia's dress has a trace of coquetry about it.

3 Why are their clothes so simple?

Partly because they are not so well off ('mixed conditions').

4 What is suggested about the nature of provincial fashion?

That female dress is not so simple, but instead has a lot of trimmings.

5 What is the social class to which the sisters belong?

They form part of the gentility. How do we know? They are distinct from the others of the region, particularly, Miss Brooke. They do not care whether they conform to the prevailing fashion or not – this is something only the upper class can afford to do. In addition, Miss Brooke is referred to in the most glorious terms. She is compared with the Virgin Mary – the ideal of Christian womanhood - and this suggests the elevated nature of her character. She is, in fact, compared to the portraits of the Virgin by the Italian painters. The suggestion is of the Italian painters of the Renaissance, because that was the height of the glory of Italian painting, (and it happened to be one of the highpoints of European painting as such). She is also compared to a fine quotation from the Bible or 'from one of our elder poets' (that is the classical poets of the Greek or Roman period). This suggests that she has a classical beauty which does not require any frills or embellishments to bring it out. She does not have to attempt to prove herself, whether in looks, clothes or character. The world around her, in comparison, is mundane, 'the paragraph of today's newspaper' in which she appears as the 'fine quotation'.

6 What features of Miss Brooke's character emerge?

She has great stature and personality. She stands far above other ordinary people in terms of her integrity and purity of character, dignity and impressiveness. She is also characterised by poetic beauty and grace, and she belongs to the highest class in society. However, she is simplicity itself, and does not put on any airs.

Notice that most of the above conclusions that we have arrived at, have not actually been stated, but they are clearly implied. We are able to arrive at these conclusions by means of careful analysis.

Now let us look at the specifically stylistic aspects of this passage.

1 Notice the length of the lines, particularly Sentence 2 (S2). Why is this such an extraordinarily long line? S1 and S3 are normal in length. What made George Eliot decide to keep all the information in S2 in a single sentence? There is great complexity of thought in S2, and several comparisons. In fact S2 is foregrounded, and one of the factors which makes for its foregrounding is its length. Complexity of thought is very often linked with complexity in sentence structure, and S2 does have a number of subordinate clauses.

2 How are the sentences linked together? What are the forms of cohesion. within and across sentences?

i) The sentences are linked by being an elaboration and enumeration of Miss Brooke's 'kind of beauty'.

ii) Words like '*than*', '*but*' and '*nevertheless*' indicate that the relationship of comparison and contrast is being frequently used.

iii) Words like '*so...that*' (S2), '*only...that*' (S4), 'for' (S4) indicate that reasons for behaviour are being presented. The linkage is between the actual behaviour and the reasons for it.

iv) Pronouns, such as '*her*', '*she*', or expressions employing pronouns, such as 'her sister' are used to link sentences.

v) The semantic range of the words used (i.e. the range of words linked in meaning) adds to the cohesion of the passage. Look at the sets of related words used:

- *beauty, finely formed, style, fashion, coquetry*
- *poor dress, sleeves, plain garments, provincial fashion, trimmings, dress, plain dressing*
- *hand and wrist, profile, stature and bearing*
- *dignity, impressiveness, clever, common sense*

3. What can you say about the imagery of the passage?

Similes: Miss Brooke's beauty is compared with the vision of the Virgin Mary as she appeared to the Renaissance Italian painters (visual image). Her character (her dignity and impressiveness) is compared to a fine quotation from i) the Bible and ii) 'one of our elder poets' (analytical images).

4. What can you say about the vocabulary of the passage?

A large number of abstract nouns are used: beauty, stature, dignity, impressiveness, clever, common sense, coquetry. This indicates that the passage deals with ideas. In spite of the description, it is a highly intellectual passage.

Several of the words used are polysyllabic, but they are not particularly difficult.

4.3.1 Grammatical analysis

Let us now analyse the clause structure of the passage. Clauses, as we all know from our study of traditional grammar, can be of three types: Simple, Compound and Complex. In the Simple sentence, the whole sentence consists of only one clause. which is the main clause. In a Compound sentence, there is more than one clause.

and these clauses are all independent or main clauses. The third type of sentence is the Complex sentence, where one or more main clause(s) are found to contain subordinate clauses, that is, clauses which cannot exist without the main clause.

Please note that a clause requires at least one verb. If there is no verb, there cannot be a clause. However long the phrase might be, if it has no verb, it remains a phrase and does not become a clause.

If the verb is so fundamental to the clause, we need to know something about it. How can we identify a verb? The framework that we will be following here falls into the **School of Halliday** (which is different from traditional grammar in several ways). Please note that according to this school of grammar, **verbs** are considered to fall into two major categories: **Finite** and **non-finite**. Finite verbs take tense and aspect, i.e., they are the regularly conjugated verbs. Non-finite verbs are not full verbs. They consist of the following: infinitives (e.g. *to be*); present participles (e.g. *being*); past participles (e.g. *been*). Non-finite forms cannot be conjugated. Don't be confused by the fact that in traditional grammar they were not considered verbs at all.

Let us look at some examples to understand the meaning of the terms used above relating to non-finite verbs, namely, *infinitive*, *present participle*, *past participle*.

'To be or not to be that is the question.'

'*To be*' and then again '*to be*' are verbs in the infinitive form. '*Is*' is a finite verb.

'Being unwell, she could not go to work.'
'*Being*' is the present participle.

Please note the difference between the use of the present participle and the present continuous tense in the following:

'She was coming home.' This is the present continuous tense.

'Coming home, she had a fall.' Here '*Coming*' is the present participle; it is not the present continuous tense. You cannot say, 'She was coming home, she had a fall'. This is incorrect grammar. '*Coming*', therefore, is not short for, 'She was coming'. It is a non-finite verb form: a present participle.

'She had been unwell, so she could not finish her work on time.'

'*Had been*' is the past perfect tense. We have 2 finite (complete) verbs in this sentence, '*had been*' and '*could not finish*'.

'Having been unwell, she could not finish her work on time.'

'*Having been*' is the past participle, not the past perfect tense. This is a non-finite verb, just as '*Coming*' in '*Coming home*' was non-finite. In this sentence, the first verb is non-finite, and the second is finite.

'She had dropped her brother off at school, so she was at last free'.

'H*ad dropped*' is the past perfect tense, and so a finite verb. 'Was' is a finite verb (simple past tense).

'Having dropped her brother off at school, she was at last free'. '*Having dropped*' is the past participle, not the past perfect tense (as in the example '*Having been*' above). It is, therefore, non-finite, while, '*was*' is finite.

Note again that both finite and non-finite verbs can form clauses. Again, a clause must have a verb, whether it is finite or non-finite. The present continuous tense as well as the past perfect tense will normally give rise to independent clauses as seen below. However, the present participle and the past participle can only give rise to dependent clauses. The test of a non-finite clause is that it cannot be conjugated. You cannot say,

*She coming home

*She having been unwell

*She having dropped her brother off at school.

In each of these cases, the present/ past participle becomes the verb in the dependent clause which needs to be completed by the main verb in the main clause.

Let us now turn to the system of bracketing employed to mark off clauses. Note that whenever there is a subordinate clause as in the case of those with the non-finite verbs as given above, the subordinate clause is marked off by brackets. The subordinate clause is contained within the main clause which is also marked off by brackets. Let us examine the sentences used above.

1. [[To be] or [not to be] that is the question.]

   The whole sentence is the main clause which contains two subordinate clauses [to be] ; [[not to be]. The main clause is enclosed by brackets. It contains two subordinate clauses within it, which are also marked off by brackets.

2. [[Being unwell,] she could not go to work.]

   The main clause is the whole sentence and is enclosed by brackets. The subordinate clause (dependent clause) occurs at the beginning, and the bracket for enclosing it occurs immediately after the bracket enclosing the main clause.

3. [[Coming home,] she had a fall.]

   Now you analyse this.

4. [She had been unwell,] [so she could not finish her work on time.]

   There are 2 main clauses (or independent clauses) here, so each is enclosed by its own brackets independently.

5. [She had dropped her brother off at school,] [so she was at last free.]

   Now you analyse this.

6. [[Having dropped her brother off at school,] she was at last free.]
   Now you analyse this.

We will now look at a passage and analyse it first into Main and Subordinate clauses, and later indicate the type of subordinate clauses used. Note that subordinate clauses have to be subordinate to something, that something being the Main Clause (MC1).

(S1) [Miss Brooke had that kind of beauty [which seems to be thrown into relief
MCl SCl
by poor dress.]] (S2) [Her hand and wrist were so finely formed [that she could
MCl SCl
wear sleeves not less bare of style than those [in which the Blessed Virgin
SCl
appeared to Italian painters;] and [her profile as well as her stature and bearing
MCl
seemed to gain the more dignity from her plain garments, [which by the side of
SCl
provincial fashion gave her the impressiveness of a fine quotation from the

Bible – or from one of our older poets – in a paragraph of today's newspaper.]]

(S3) [She was usually spoken of as [being remarkably clever,]] but [with the
MCl SCl MCl
addition that her sister Celia had more common-sense.] (S4) [Nevertheless,
MCl
Celia wore scarcely more trimmings] and [it was only to close observers that
MCl
her dress [differed from her sister's] and [had a shade of coquetry in its
SCl SCl
arrangements;]] [for Miss Brooke's plain dressing was due to mixed conditions,
MCl
[in most of which her sister shared.]]
SCl

Note that the main clause carries the main force of the sentence, and if there is more than one main clause, the sentence has more than one focus. Subordinate clauses are subordinated in focus. There is nothing inherently unimportant about the nature of the information. It is just that the writer has chosen to subordinate it, in order to pursue the main ideas s/he has in mind.

Note the conventions that have been used to indicate the clauses:
MCl = Main clause
SCl = Subordinate clause

Each independent clause is marked off by square brackets, namely [---]. Within these, there may be dependent clauses, also marked off by square brackets. Please note that if there is only one main clause, it covers the whole sentence. So the main clause bracket comes at the beginning of the sentence and again at the end of the sentence. e.g. 'The girl who was wearing trousers, came into the room.' Now 'the girl came into the room' is the main clause, while 'who was wearing trousers' is the subordinate clause. The bracketing will be as follows.

[The girl [who was wearing trousers] came into the room.]

Note that the main clause brackets are at the beginning and end of the sentence, while the subordinate clause is marked off inbetween.

Also note that the sentence-initial bracket for the main clause will be required even if the sentence begins with a subordinate clause. e.g. 'Before sitting down, she cleared off the mess.' The main clause is 'she cleared off the mess', because that is the main message of the sentence. The subordinate clause occurs at the beginning of the sentence 'Before sitting down'. The bracketing will be as follows.

[[Before sitting down] she cleared off the mess.]

At the beginning of the sentence, you have the beginning of the main clause which at that point is the subordinate clause. At the end of the subordinate clause, the real part of the main clause comes on. The double brackets at the beginning of the sentence indicate the beginning of the main clause and then the beginning of the subordinate clause.

- In the passage being analysed, what is the proportion of independent clauses to dependent clauses? **The greater the number of independent clauses, usually the more clear-cut is the passage, the more simple and readable. Complexity in thought is usually conveyed by the use of dependent clauses, subordinated to main clauses.**

In this passage, there are 9 independent and 6 dependent clauses. So the independent clauses are more than the dependent clauses, making for the easy readability of the passage. However, there is indication of complexity of thought because of the use of a number of subordinate clauses.

Let us now analyse the clause structure again, this time looking at the types of subordinate clauses used. The following types of subordinate clauses are likely to occur:

Subordinate Clauses

RCl	= Relative Clause
NCl	= Noun Clause
NCli	= Noun Clause (infinitival)
ACl	= Adverbial Clause
NP	= Noun Phrase (indicated only when followed by a relative clause)
PRCl	= Prepositional Relative Clause
CCl	= Comparative Clause

Cl in parenthesis = Clause in parenthesis

Phrases

Phrases are not indicated, except in the case of Relative Clauses, where the preceding Noun Phrase is marked off because it contains within itself the Relative Clause. The relative clause is considered to be a part of the Noun Phrase (NP): it is the post-modification of the Noun Phrase. This phrase will be marked by a round bracket before the Noun Phrase and end with a round bracket after the Relative Clause, to indicate the end of the NP within which the Relative Clause occurs.

(S1) [Miss Brooke had that kind of beauty [which seems to be thrown into relief
MCl RCl
by poor dress.]] (S2) [Her hand and wrist were so finely formed [that she could
MCl ACl (result)
wear sleeves not less bare of style than those [in which the Blessed Virgin
PRCl
appeared to Italian painters;] and [her profile as well as her stature and bearing
MCl
seemed to gain the more dignity from her plain garments, [which by the side of
RCl
provincial fashion gave her the impressiveness of a fine quotation from the
Bible – or from one of our older poets – in a paragraph of today's newspaper.]]
(S3) [She was usually spoken of as [being remarkably clever,]] but [with the
MCl NCling MCl
addition that her sister Celia had more common-sense.] (S4) [Nevertheless,
MCl
Celia wore scarcely more trimmings] and [it was only to close observers that
MCl
her dress [differed from her sister's] and [had a shade of coquetry in its
NCl NCl
arrangements;]] [for Miss Brooke's plain dressing was due to mixed conditions,
MCl
[in most of which her sister shared.]
PRCl

Of the subordinate clauses indicated here, there is 1 Adverbial Clause, 2 Relative Clauses, 2 Prepositional Relative Clauses, 2 Noun Clauses and 1 Noun Clause (non-finite: *-ing*). The Adverbial Clause of result shows the effect of Miss Brooke's clothes on her looks and character. The Relative Clauses are descriptive of her clothes and therefore of her character. The Noun Clauses provides an analysis of her dress.

Phrase structure of the passage.

There are a large number of prepositional phrases in the passage. Prepositional phrases have an adverbial function. Prepositional phrases necessarily contain noun phrases. Thus, prepositional phrases have features of nominal (noun) and adverbial constructions. Nominals are analytic, while adverbials fall basically into 2 categories: descriptive (manner, place, time) and analytic (reason, purpose, result). According to the phrases used, the passage is both analytic and descriptive. This is also true of the clauses used. Thus the phrasal and clause analysis fits in with our reading of the passage, and provides an explanation of the effect created.

Note: *Please note that there may be more than one way of identifying clauses and labelling the subordinate clauses. Grammar book sentences, which are absolutely clear-cut, don't usually occur in actual passages. So it may be possible to argue for one interpretation or another.*

Building on the work done, we will now deal with another passage in greater detail.

Passage 2

(S1) There was once in the city of Alifbay, a sad city, the saddest of cities, a city so ruinously sad that it had forgotten its name. (S2) It stood by a mournful sea full of glumfish, which were so miserable to eat that they made people belch with melancholy even though the skies were blue.

(S3) In the north of the sad city stood mighty factories in which (so I'm told) sadness was actually manufactured, packaged and sent all over the world, which never seemed to get enough of it. (S4) Black smoke poured out of the chimneys of the sadness factories and hung over the city like bad news.

(S5) And in the depths of the city, beyond an old zone of ruined buildings that looked like broken hearts, there lived a happy young fellow by the name of Haroun, the only child of the storyteller Rashid Khalifa, whose cheerfulness was famous throughout that unhappy metropolis, and whose never-ending stream of tall, short and winding tales had earned him not one but two nicknames. (S6) To his admirers he Rashid the Ocean of Notions, as stuffed with cheery stories as the sea was full of glumfish; but to his jealous rivals he was the Shah of Blah.

1. Now we will analyse the passage into clauses and identify the types of subordinate clauses used.

(S1) [There was once in the country of Alifbay, a sad city, the saddest of cities,
MCl
a city so ruinously sad [that it had forgotten its name.])] (S2) [It stood by
ACl MCl
a mournful sea full of (glumfish, [which were so miserable to eat [that
NP RCl RCl
they made people [belch with melancholy [even though the skies were
NCli ACl
blue.]]]])]
(S3) [In the north of the sad city stood (mighty factories [in which [(so I'm
MCl NP PRCl Cl in
told)] <sadness was actually manufactured,]> <[packaged]> and <[sent all
PRCl PRCl

over (the world, >[which never seemed to get enough of it.])]]])]
RCl
(S4) <[Black smoke poured out of the chimneys of the sadness factories]>
MCl
and <[hung over the city like bad news].>
MCl
(S5) [And in the depths of the city, beyond an old zone of (ruined
MCl NP
buildings [that looked like broken hearts,]) there lived a happy young
RCl
fellow by the name of (Haroun, the only child of the storyteller Rashid
NP
Khalifa, <[whose cheerfulness was famous throughout that unhappy
RCl
metropolis,]>and <[whose never-ending stream of tall, short and winding
RCl
tales had earned him not one but two nicknames.])]

(S6) [<To his admirers he was Rashid the Ocean of Notions>, [as stuffed with
MCl CC1
cheery stories] [as the sea was full of glumfish;]] but <[to his jealous
CC2 MCl
rivals he was the Shah of Blah.]>

Note: *Please note that PRCl means Prepositional Relative Clause, i.e. a Relative Clause which begins with a preposition, e.g. '(a book, [with which you have to be careful']).*

Also note that there may be coordinate clauses and these are usually indicated by angular brackets. The clauses which are coordinate may be coordinate to the MCl, or to one of the subordinate clauses.

Let us now look at some of the features of language that are significant in this passage. The verbs appear to be striking. Let us analyse these.

We find a large number of **dynamic ver**bs, e.g. *belch, manufactured, packaged, poured, hung, stuffed.* Dynamic verbs are those which deal with physical action. The more precise the physical action, the more dynamic it is, e.g. '*pranced'* is more dynamic than '*walked'*.

There are also many **stative verbs**, e.g. *be* (5 instances), *had forgotten, stood, made, told, looked, lived, earned.* Stative verbs are those which deal with states, physical or mental states, or mental activity, e.g. '*remembered'*.

The dynamic verbs make this passage lively, while the stative verbs help to provide the descriptive element, that is the background of the story.

Note that stativeness leads to statements of fact, e.g. "The book is on the table"; or to the presentation of author's/ character's attitudes, e.g. "He thought that all would be well".

Dynamicness of verbs leads to:

a. figurative speech,
e.g. "Black smoke poured out of the chimneys", and

b. precision of description, e.g. "They were prancing to battle". Notice how much less dynamic is the statement, "They were going to battle".

Many of the figures of speech used are also dramatic. Let us consider their effect on the passage. Two main functions seem to be achieved through figures of speech in this passage.

First, the basic qualities of phenomena are changed, so material items are seen as animate or human, or the abstract is made concrete, and so on. As this has the effect of making the familiar appear strange and unfamiliar, the passage acquires a sense of fantasy.

Second, a large number of similes are employed. Here again, the two items being compared are not really comparable on the surface. The point of comparison is abstract or is far-fetched, and the comparison is made for purposes of humour.

Let us now analyse these in greater detail. The figures of speech employed here are:

a) Changing the qualities of phenomena
   i) Personification of inanimate phenomena, e.g. "a sad city"; "a city that had forgotten its name", "mournful sea", "unhappy metropolis"
   ii) Concretisation of abstract qualities, e.g. sadness is treated like a commodity in 'sadness was actually manufactured, packaged...'
   iii) Treating categories of phenomena as if they belonged to another category, e.g. "black smoke" (a gaseous state) is treated like a liquid ('poured'); and then like a solid ('hung')

   Similes, e.g.

   (S4) "Black smoke hung over the city like bad news"
   (S5) "ruined buildings that looked like broken hearts"
   (S6) "as stuffed with cheery stories as the sea was full of glumfish"

Changing the qualities of phenomena as well as the use of similes together create the feeling of an atmosphere different from that of everyday life. They help to lead us into a fairy tale world.

Another point to notice is the large number of Noun Phrases used in the passage. However, in spite of these, the passage is not difficult to process. Let us consider the linguistic devices that are used to make it readable.

A large number of the NPs occur as a part of Prepositional Phrases, which have the adverbial function of place ("in the country of Alifbay"; "by a mournful sea full of glumfish", etc) and manner ("with melancholy"; "with cheery stories"). These make for description, not analysis, and hence are easy to process.

Again there is a great deal of post-modification through relative clauses (e.g. "all over the world which never seemed to get enough of it"; "ruined buildings that looked like broken hearts"). Unlike most uses of relative clauses, these are not purely descriptive: they provide a comment through humorous, somewhat ironic means. This adds a lighter touch.

Another factor that makes for easy processing is the repetition of constructions (parallelisms), e.g.:

a sad city the saddest of cities a city so ruinously sad that...name
manufactured packaged sent
Black smoke poured out...sadness factories and hung over...bad news.
This makes for rhythm which gives rise to ease in remembering.

Let us now analyse another passage.

Passage 3

(S1) Sophie Amundsen was often dissatisfied with her appearance. (S2) She was frequently told that she had beautiful almond-shaped eyes, but that was probably just something people said because her nose was too small and her mouth was a bit too big. (S3) And her ears were much too close to her eyes. (S4) Worst of all was her straight hair, which it was impossible to do anything with. (S5) Sometimes her father would stroke her hair and call her 'the girl with the flaxen hair', after a piece of music by Claude Debussy. (S6) It was all right for him, he was not condemned to living with this straight dark hair. (S7) Neither mousse nor styling gel had the slightest effect on Sophie's hair. (S8) Sometimes she thought she was so ugly that she wondered if she was malformed at birth. (S9) Her mother always went on about her difficult labour. (S10) But was that really what determined how you looked? (S11) Wasn't it odd that she didn't know who she was? (S12) And wasn't it unreasonable that she hadn't been allowed to have any say in what she would look like? (S13) Her looks had just been dumped on her. (S14) She could choose her own friends, but she certainly hadn't chosen herself.

The clause analysis is as follows.

Note: *Please note that PRCl means Prepositional Relative Clause, i.e. a Relative Clause which begins with a preposition, e.g. '(a book, [with which you have to be careful])'.*

Also note that there may be coordinate clauses and these are usually indicated by angular brackets. The clauses which are coordinate may be coordinate to the MCl, or to one of the subordinate clauses.

(S1) [Sophie Amundsen was often dissatisfied with her appearance.]
MCl
(S2) [She was frequently told [that she had beautiful almond-shaped
MCl NCl
eyes,]] but [that was [probably just something people said [because <her
MCl ACl MCll
nose was too small>] and [<her mouth was a bit too big.>]]] (S3)<[And her
MCl MCl
ears were much too close to her eyes.] (S4) [Worst of all was her (straight
MCl NP
hair, [which it was impossible [to do anything with.]])] (S5) [Sometimes
PRCl NCli MCl
her father would <stroke her hair>]and [<call her 'the girl with the flaxen
MCl
hair'>, after a piece of music by Claude Debussy.] (S6) [It was all right
MCl
for him, [he was not condemned to [living with this straight dark hair.]]]
ACl NCling
(S7) [Neither mousse nor styling gel had the slightest effect on Sophie's
MCl
hair.] (S8) [Sometimes she thought [she was so ugly [that she wondered
NCl NCl
[if she was malformed at birth.]]] (S9) [Her mother always went on about
NCl MCl
her difficult labour.]

(S10) [But was that really [what determined [how you looked?]]
MCl NCl NCl
(S11) [Wasn't it odd [that she didn't know [who she was?]]] (S12) [And
MCl NCl NCl MCl
wasn't it unreasonable [that she hadn't been allowed [to have any say in
NCl NCli

[what she would look like?]]]] (S13) [Her looks had just been dumped on
NCl MCl
her.] (S14) <[She could choose her own friends,]> but <[she certainly
MCl MCl
hadn't chosen herself.]>

The *verbs* in this passage are worth commenting on for exactly the opposite reasons from the previous passage. They are most unremarkable. Mostly the verb *to be* is used and there are many instances of the modal form *(would)*. There are also verbs like *thought, wondered.* That is, there are mainly stative verbs. The use of stative verbs creates a passage which reflects the narrator's thought processes. There is no action or movement, only the presentation of thought processes, and conjectures about the probable reasons for the way the character looked.

The passive voice is used to a large extent, (e.g. 'he was not condemned to living with this straight dark hair') because the narrator looks upon herself as being acted upon, not as an actor in the events concerning her own looks.

Also noteworthy is the use of '**free indirect speech**'. Let us understand what this means. Everyone knows what 'direct speech' and 'indirect speech' are. Direct speech consists of the character's own words. Indirect speech is the character's thoughts/ feelings expressed by the author. **Free indirect speech is simultaneously the author's statement of the character's thoughts and the character in the act of thinking them**. Look at the utterances from S10 to S14, presented for convenience below. Each of these is both the author's report and the character's own thoughts.

(S10) But was that really what determined how you looked? (S11) Wasn't it odd that she didn't know who she was? (S12) And wasn't it unreasonable that she hadn't been allowed to have any say in what she would look like? (S13) Her looks had just been dumped on her. (S14) She could choose her own friends, but she certainly hadn't chosen herself.

In the sentences given above, we have Sophie looking at her own feelings. But the sentences are simultaneously presented as the author's own analysis of the character. That is to say, we are looking at the action from both the author's and character's perspective at the same time. This gives a feeling of authenticity, and a feeling that the author has penetrated to the heart of the character.

Let us look at one more passage.

Passage 4

(S1) If what we call a desert is a place without a soul in which the sky alone is king, then Oran awaits its prophets. (S2) All around and above the town the brutal nature of Africa is, in fact, resplendent in its most burning glory. (S3) It splits open the ill-chosen decor which men have laid upon it, utters its violent cries between each house and over all the housetops. (S4) If you go up on to one of the roads running along the side of the Santa Cruz mountain, what you see first of all are the scattered and brightly coloured blocks of Oran. (S5) But as soon as you go a little higher, the jagged cliffs surrounding the plateau seem to be crouching in the sea like red beasts. (S6) From higher still, great whirlpools of sun and wind swirl over the untidy town, blowing and battering through it as it lies scattered in confusion over all four corners of the rocky landscape. (S7) You see the clash between the magnificent anarchy of the permanence of an unchanging sea. This gives the road along the mountainside an overwhelming scent of life.

Clause Analysis

Now you do the clause analysis. The bracketing of the clauses has been done for you. You have to fill in the categories: MCl, coordinate clause (also to be indicated as MCl), and the different subordinate clauses: ACl, NCl, NCli, NCling, NClen, RCl, PRCl.

Note that **Cli** means one in which an infinitive verb is used; **Cling** is one in which a present participial form of verb is used; and **Clen** one in which a past participial form of verb is used. They may combined with a noun clause to form NCli etc, or a relative clause to form RCli etc, or an adverbial clause to form ACli etc.

(S1) [[If [what we call a desert] is a place without a soul, [in which the sky alone is king,]] then Oran awaits its prophets.] (S2) [All around and above the town the brutal nature of Africa is, in fact, resplendent in its most burning glory.] (S3) [It splits open (the ill-chosen decor [which men have laid upon it]], [utters its violent cries between each house and over all the housetops.] (S4) [[If you go up on to one of (the roads [running along the side of the Santa Cruz mountain])] , [what you see first of all] are the scattered and brightly coloured blocks of Oran.] (S5) [[But [as soon as you go a little higher,] (the jagged cliffs [surrounding the plateau]) seem to be crouching in the sea like red beasts.] (S6) [From higher still, great whirlpools of sun and wind swirl over the untidy town, [blowing] and [battering through it [as it lies [scattered in confusion over all four corners of the rocky landscape.]]]] (S7) [You see the clash between this magnificent anarchy and the permanence of an unchanging sea.] (S8) [This gives the road along the mountain-side an overwhelming sense of life.]

Now check your work.

(S1) [[If [what we call a desert] is a place without a soul, [in which the sky
MCl ACl NCl PRCl
alone is king,]] then Oran awaits its prophets.] (S2) [All around and
MCl
above the town the brutal nature of Africa is, in fact, resplendent in its

most burning glory.] (S3) [It splits open (the ill-chosen decor [which men
MCl RCl
have laid upon it]], [utters its violent cries between each house and over
MCl
all the housetops.] (S4) [[If you go up on to one of (the roads [running
MCl ACl RCling
along the side of the Santa Cruz mountain])] , [what you see first of all]
NCl
are the scattered and brightly coloured blocks of Oran.] (S5) [[But [as
MCl ACl

soon as you go a little higher,] (the jagged cliffs [surrounding the plateau])
NP RCling
seem to be crouching in the sea like red beasts.] (S6) [From higher still,
MCl
great whirlpools of sun and wind swirl over the untidy town, [blowing]
NCling
and [battering through it [as it lies [scattered in confusion over all four
NCling ACl AClen
corners of the rocky landscape.]]]] (S7) [You see the clash between this
MCl
magnificent anarchy and the permanence of an unchanging sea.] (S8)

[This gives the road along the mountain-side an overwhelming sense of
MCl
life.]

Stylistic Analysis

The verb forms used in the passage are striking. Consider the following two types of verb forms:
Dynamic verbs: *awaits* its prophets (in this context, dynamic), *splits* open, *utters* its violent cries, *running* along the side of, *seem to be crouching*, *swirl*, *blowing*, *battering*
Stative verbs: *be* (3), *call, see* (2), *lies/ laid* (2), *gives, go* (2),

There is a great deal of violence in the passage, partly brought out through the use of the dynamic verbs. The stative verbs are quite colourless, and form a background for the dynamic verbs and **powerful adjectives** (*resplendent*, *burning*, *jagged*, etc.).

A fair number of the dynamic verbs are of the Cling (i.e. Non-finite present participial clause) pattern, indicating a restlessness of motion, and unrelieved continuity of violent action.

By and large, the simple present tense is used, indicating that the description is of a scene of some permanence, one that will not change readily, and is a habitual feature of the environment.

But the passage is more than merely descriptive: it is **analytical**. It seems to analyse the scene from a critical, almost moral view-point. Certain linguistic features indicate this very clearly. These are

i) long and striking NPs, e.g. "resplendent in its most burning glory", "its violent cries between each house and over all the housetops"; "the scattered and brightly coloured blocks of Oran", "great whirlpools of sun and wind ", "all four corners of the rocky landscape"

ii) NPs containing post-modification by Relative Clauses, e.g. "a soul in which the sky alone is king", "the ill-chosen decor which men have laid upon it", "the jagged cliffs surrounding the plateau"

The use of long NPs is the usual indicator of complexity of thought structure, and evidence of analytical comments.

iii) Aphoristic statements like "a desert is a place without a soul in which the sky alone is king" which seem to have a poetic profundity.

iv) The use of the *if* clauses. Two such clauses occur and the second is followed by "But as soon as you go a little higher..." which contradicts the previous *if*, takes the passage away from plain description, bringing in conditionality, and therefore, analytical thinking.

Another question arises about the **length of sentences** in the passage and their effect on the passage.

The sentences seem to be of average length, neither longer nor shorter than is usual. The passage is extremely dense, in spite of the *lack* of unwieldy sentence length. The **density** is caused by foregrounding a large number of items, dynamic verbs, adjectives, as well as the piling on of colour and violent action. What saves it from further density is the relatively low level of complexity in clause structure, i.e. the level of subordination of clauses is low, and most of the subordinate clauses are Relative Clauses and Adverbial Clauses of place and manner. The Adverbial Clauses of condition, however, do lead to complexity.

4.4 ANALYSIS OF POETRY

Let us now look at a few examples drawn from poetry. And consider the effect of the language used on the stylistic effect they create.

1. 'I am the heir of all the ages' (Tennyson: from 'Locksley Hall')

You will now have to recall all that you learnt about phonetics and phonology in order to analyse the stylistic effects here. You will notice that the line given above is almost free of consonant sounds. The vowel sounds predominate. This is a somewhat unusual state of affairs and therefore worthy of investigation. We can say that vowels in this line are foregrounded. Let us now consider the nature of the vowel sounds used. I will list these through a phonetic transcription of the line.

aiəmðieirəvɔ:lðieidiz.

Notice that all the vowel sounds and diphthongs fall into the category of front vowels and front-oriented diphthongs. These front sounds are all produced with spread lips and are not rounded. The effect of these sounds is flat, sharp and sometimes harsh. Such a long line of these sounds does indeed produce a calculated effect. It gives the impression of great length. It draws out time to appear immeasurably long. The *'ages'* seem like an unbroken succession flowing down time. There are no consonants to stop the flow of the air stream, and thus, by implication, nothing comes in the way of the unbroken stream of time. There are no rounded vowels to give variety, or provide the notion of cyclical periods of time, it is just one uninterrupted flow. The 'heir' of all this stands at the very end and thus, he is to be thought of as the culminating point. This is the effect that is created.

2. Now let us look at another line.

'Fair is foul, and foul is fair.' (*Macbeth*, I, i)

Notice that while the words *'fair'* and *'foul'* are absolutely opposed in meaning, in terms of the consonant sounds used, they are very similar. In both these words, the first sound is /f/. The last sounds are /r/ and /l/, both of which are very similar. So similar are they in place and manner of production, that children often confuse them, and the Japanese regularly produce the sound /l/ in place of /r/ when they speak English. The consonants of the two words, then are identical, or near identical. The vowels, however, are very different. The vowel /eə/ occurs in 'fair' and the vowel /au/ in 'foul'. The first is a front vowel produced with spread lips and the second a back vowel produced with rounded lips. The similarity of the two consonants is offset only by the difference in the vowels. This play on identity and slight difference in

sounds depicts very clearly how the two concepts, fairness and foulness can be confused in *Macbeth*.

3. Let us look at another.

'So all day long the noise of battle rolled' (Tennyson: 'Morte D'Arthur')

Let us analyse the consonants here.
What is the most dominant consonant? Why?
/l/. Because it occurs most frequently in important words.
Which are the other important consonants?
/d/ /b/ /n/ /ng/ /r/

Let us look at the features of these consonants. The /l/, /r/ /n/ and /ng/ sounds are all called **continuants**, because the sounds can be continued without any stoppage in the air stream. Being continuants, the sounds add to the flow and length of the line. So it appears that the battle was long and continuous. The plosive consonants /b/ and /d/ which interrupt the free flow of sound by virtue of stopping the air stream and then releasing it with a kind of explosion, suggest that it was a grim battle.

Which vowel sounds are used?
Sə͡ʊɔ:l de͡i lɒng nɔ͡iz bætl rə͡ʊld

They are mainly back-oriented diphthongs: /əʊ/, /əʊ/, /ɔi/. There are only two front sounds: one front vowel and one front-oriented diphthong. The back-oriented diphthongs are necessarily rounded sounds. So there is a predominance of rounded vocalic (vowel) sounds. This makes the action seem to be cyclical, the same events occurring again and again.
So, in addition to the battle being long and continuous, it also cyclical. The roundedness also suggests that the events are of momentous importance. It is not a modern type of battle where you visualise a large number of dead bodies lying around. It is a battle where deeds of personal heroism and glory are performed. It appears as if the battle itself is great and glorious. The rounded vowels are like drumbeats proclaiming to the world that this great event is taking place.

4. Now look at these lines.
'Here files of pins extend their shining rows,
Puffs, powders, patches, bibles, billets-doux.'
(Pope: from *The Rape of the Lock*)

Look first at the contrast between the two lines. The first is one unbroken line. The second has a pause after each word. The second line has an unusual number of pauses, and these pauses are therefore foregrounded. A list of items is being presented.

The scene is the description of a dressing table. Everything is organised in a manner resembling the ranks of an army of soldiers. (And in fact the poem is a humorous account of the war of the sexes). Notice that we have 'files of pins' and 'shining rows' – everything is precisely organised like soldiers lined up for battle. Because there are no pauses, we see the pins extending over a huge space. So it is a battle of some importance. The second line is very different, where we see each item individually, and each appears out of proportion huge. Now look more closely at what these items are. Among puffs, powders and patches, suddenly you have 'bibles'. Bibles, that is copies of the holy book are placed on the dressing table quite as if they were also cosmetic items meant to enhance a lady's beauty. The bibles and 'billet-doux' (French for love letters) jostle for space among the puffs and powders. The poet is obviously being ironical. He is telling us that for the lady he is depicting, the holy book and items of cosmetics have the same value. Even more indirectly, the

poet is criticising the nature of the upper class society of his day for having no concern for religion and morality, but only for superficial, material values.

5. Now we shall look at the following poem by e.e.cummings:

a wind has blown the rain away and blown
the sky and all the leaves away,
and the trees stand. I think I too have known
autumn too long
and what have you to say,
wind wind wind - did you love somebody
and have the petal of somewhere in your heart
pinched from dumb summer?

a) First, I provide the phonetic symbols of the consonants occurring here, classifying them according to place, manner and type of articulation (three-term labels). I am also underlining all the content words, for you get the hang of identifying them. The sounds in content words have much greater stylistic effect than those in non-content words, for content words normally carry greater stress. I only provide a few sample three-term labels (indicating voicing, place and manner of articulation).

a wind has blown the rain away and blown
w nd h z bl n r n w nd bl n
the sky and all the leaves away,
sk nd l l v z w
and the trees stand. I think I too have known
nd tr z st nd nk t h v n n
autumn too long
t m t l n
and what have you to say,
nd w t h v j t s
wind wind wind - did you love somebody
w nd w nd w nd d d j l v s m b d
and have the petal of somewhere in your heart
nd h v p t l v s mw n j h t
pinched from dumb summer?
P n t t fr m d m s m

/n/ (voiced) alveolar nasal
/d/ voiced alveolar plosive
/b/ voiced bilabial plosive
/t/ voiceless alveolar affricate
/w/ rounded semi-vowel
l (voiced) lateral
/v/ voiced labio-dental fricative
/s/ voiceless alveolar fricative
/j/ unrounded semi-vowel

b) Which consonantal sounds predominate in this poem? What is their effect on the poem as a whole?

The predominant consonants are /w/, /l/, /n/: a semi-vowel, lateral and nasal, all of them liquids and continuants. These create the sense of flow and help to provide the lyricism of the poem. There are also fricatives in the extract: prominently, /v/, /r/, /z/, /s/, /ʃ/, which are also continuants. There are a few plosives, notably /b/, /d/, /g/ (voiced) and /t/, /k/, and in the last two lines, /p/ (voiceless). These arrest the flow of the breath and create a harsher effect. They arrest the easy flow of sounds with the definiteness of harsh reality, the love that has been nipped in the bud. However, note that these are mainly the voiceless plosives, the softer sounds. In addition, the consonant clusters that occur, bl, nd, nt have plosives linked with continuants or with fricatives, as in sk, tr, st so the effect is not so harsh, not that of a mood of bitterness caused by the blighting of his love, but of anguish and pain. The harshness of the plosives is thereby tempered, and in spite of the heartbreak the poet is

undergoing, the poem remains predominantly lyrical, the lyricism indicating the beauty of the love that he has now lost. It does not cease to be beautiful even in his state of deprivation.

c) Rewrite the last four lines of the poem, providing the phonetic symbols of the vowels/ diphthongs occurring there. Classify them according to whether they are:

i) front, central and back vowels; close, half-open, open
ii) diphthongs which, in terms of prominence, are predominantly oriented to the front, back or centre (e.g. /ɔi/ is predominantly back-oriented)

and what have you to say,
u u ei
wind wind wind - did you love somebody
i i i i u i
and have the petal of somewhere in your heart
e i
pinched from dumb summer?
i

[I will only provide a few sample descriptions of vowels and diphthongs.]
/u/ rounded close back vowel /i/ unrounded close front vowel
/ei/ front-oriented diphthong /e/ unrounded half-close front vowel

d) Which type of vowels and diphthongs predominate in the WHOLE poem? What effect do they create?

The front vowels and front-oriented diphthongs predominate in the poem. This gives rise to the effect of the jarring of emotions, of lack of completion, of pain and suffering. There is a larger proportion of back vowels and back-oriented diphthongs in the first five lines than in the latter part. The greater number of front vowels and front-oriented diphthongs in the last four lines brings out the extreme anguish felt by the poet, the devastation he experiences.

e) Let us consider the phonological features used to create the effect of the poem, particularly in terms of alliteration and assonance (vowel harmony).

There is a high degree of alliteration in the extract. The sounds /n/, /l/ and /w/: liquids and semi-vowel, occur most frequently and create the feeling of lyricism and flow. In the last two lines the sounds /p/ and /m/, /n/ occur several times, reinforcing the poet's suffering, and his sense of helplessness in his suffering. There is also a considerable amount of assonance: the /əu/ sound in blown (2) and known; the /ɔ:/ sound in all, autumn; the repetition of the /i/ sound in wind (4), think, pinched; the /ei/ sound in rain, away, say; the /ʌ/ sound in dumb and summer. The assonance occurs in the rhyming words as well as in the middle of lines. It strengthens the musical quality of the poem, and makes it more poignant.

Other noteworthy features are the flowing rhythm, the run-on lines indicating the uncontrollable outpouring of his emotions. There are also long pauses, after 'trees stand', 'too long', and after 'wind wind wind' which enable us to see the poet in the act of trying to articulate the overpowering nature of his emotions, of pausing in the act, moving from one thought/ feeling to another.

f) Let us look at the imagery in the poem.

The imagery is drawn from nature, and from nature in a state of turbulence. It is something larger than man but seems to have the same problems as seen

in one small self, i.e. nature is personified, as in 'wind wind wind - did you love somebody', where human emotions are attributed to the wind. Second, human emotions are seen in terms of nature, as in 'I think I too have known /autumn too long', where *'autumn'* is not just the season, but an image which reflects the sense of complete bleakness and devastation that the poet is experiencing. Third, nature is merely described, as in the first three lines 'a wind...trees stand.' But this also reflects the emotional state of affairs he is expressing.

To sum up, nature appears as elemental and basic to life, and his sense of loss is seen as both personal and as having far wider dimensions, becoming universal in its implications.

4.5 LET US SUM UP

In Section I of this Unit, we have dealt with the following ideas:

1. The language of every day use forms the background against which literature (literary language) is produced.
2. Other specific forms of language, like the language of advertising, are related in some ways to literary language, e.g. advertising, like literature, creates its own world in which its language makes sense.
3. Literary language necessarily reflects the thematic content of the work, because the style creates the world of the novel/ poem within which the action takes place. Thus, stylistics yields essential knowledge about the literary text.
4. The language of literature can never be taken as literally as ordinary language can be taken, because it has meaning, not of itself alone, but by the context which it has been selected to reflect., within a literary work, however, we can distinguish between literal and figurative uses of language.
5. The world of a literary work is closed and complete, in the sense that it is an organic whole. (Naturally, of course, it has to reflect reality if it has to have any significance at all.) The reader is not part of the dimensions of the work. He/she stands outside.
6. The literary work is foregrounded against ordinary language, i.e. it stands out as a special use of language for a specific purpose. Within the literary work itself, some part of the language used is foregrounded and the rest forms the background.
7. Foregrounding takes place in two ways, through: i) the creation of rhythmic patterns or parallelisms and ii) deviation from the accepted conventions of grammar, lexis, phonology and discourse patterns.

Finally, keeping all these factors in mind, we have analysed both fiction and poetry.

4.6 KEY WORDS

Figurative meaning: Language which uses figures of speech for example, **metaphor, similie, alliteration.** Figurative language must be distinguished from literal language.

Symbol: an object, animate or inanimate, which represents or 'stands for' something else.

foregrounding:	any process for making something into the most central and prominent figure during a certain stretch of discourse.
parallelism:	a very common device in poetry. It consists of phrases or sentences of similar construction and meaning placed side by side, balancing each other.
alliteration:	a figure of speech in which consonants, especially at the beginning of words, or stressed syllables, are repeated.
assonance:	consists of the repetition of similar vowel sounds, usually close together, to achieve a particular effect.
dynamic verb:	a verb which denotes an action or an event, such as **go, kill, kiss or explode.**
stative verb:	a verb whose meaning is a state of affairs, rather than an event or an action. Examples are **know, love, exist and believe.**

UNIT 5 ANALYSING TEXTS-II

Structure

5.0 Objectives
5.1 Passages
5.2 Checklist to study texts
5.3 More passages
5.4 Let us sum up
5.5 Key words

5.0 OBJECTIVES

In the previous Unit, we have examined several passages and extracts from poems to derive the stylistic effect created by the language used.

Now we will look at a few passages in order to analyse their effect from the point of view of dialectal variation. We also give you a Checklist which will help you analyse passages from prose fiction. Then we give you passages to analyse on your own.

5.1 PASSAGES

Passage 1

'Has he many men, then?' said Elizabeth-Jane.

'Many! Why, my good maid, he's the powerfullest member of the Town council, and quite a principal man in the country round besides. Never a big dealing in wheat, barley, oats, hay, roots, and such-like but Henchard's got a hand in it. Ay, and he'll go into other things too; and that's where he makes his mistake. He worked his way up from nothing when 'a came here; and now he's a pillar of the town. Not but what he's been shaken a little to-year about this bad corn he has supplied in his contracts. I've seen the sun rise over Durnover Moor these nine-and- sixty year, and though Mr Henchard has never cussed me unfairly ever since I've worked for'n, seeing I be but a small man, I must say that I have never before tasted such rough bread as has been made from Henchard's wheat lately. 'Tis that growed out that ye could a'most call it malt, and there's list at bottom o' the loaf as thick as the sole of one's shoe.'

Notice that there are a large number of occurrences of non-standard English. These appear to be dialectal variations which have been introduced for a particular stylistic purpose.

a) Let us first note the instances of dialectal variation, and the nature of the variation.

1 'Why my good maid'

This is a somewhat archaic use of the word 'maid', and because it appears perfectly naturally here, it probably means that the writer lived in the nineteenth century or thereabouts.

2 'he's probably the powerfullest member of the Town Council'

This suggests that possibly the speaker is uneducated and comes from a village. The references are to farming.

1. 'Mr Henchard has never cussed me unfairly'
'cussed' = cursed. Pronunciation variation.

2. 'I've worked for'n
Pronunciation variation

3. 'could a'most call it malt'
Pronunciation variation

4. 'seeing I be but a small man'
Grammatical variation

5. 'Tis that I growed out'
Grammatical variation

6. 'these nine-and-sixty year
Grammatical variation; also variation in phraseology

7. 'there's a list at bottom o'the loaf as thick as the sole of one's shoe
Colourful language with similes is very often used in non-standard dialects, both regional and urban.

b) What is the effect sought to be created by the use of this dialect?

It brings out the atmosphere of a village or small town. It also tells us something about the character, whose language, colourful to us, seems to suggest the stolidity of a villager, one who is not in a hurry to make up his mind about people, but when he does so, it is for sound reasons. We would tend to believe what such a character had to say.

Remember that language is not a monolithic whole. Most languages have different varieties spoken in different geographical regions, wherein the speech community resides. In addition to geographical distinction, languages can also differ on the basis of caste, class, age or sex.

That variety of any language which for social, economic or cultural reasons, is used in print and taught in school, is called the standard variety of the language.

Dialects usually differ from the standard variety of the language on the basis of vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. The word 'dialect' is used by traditional grammarians in a pejorative sense. However, to a linguist, all varieties of a language are equally important.

Most people in England speak in a dialectal variety rather than in standard English. Those who live in cities speak in urban dialects and those who live in the countryside speak in rural dialects. 'Cockney', which is spoken in London, is an important urban dialect of English. Most urban dialects are considered 'ugly', while rural dialects are to be 'quaint' and 'musical'. These are value judgements to which most linguists do not subscribe.

Most works of literature are written by educated persons, who are familiar with the standard variety of their language, so, this is the variety most often used in literature. However, dialects are employed quite often, in order to

make the characters speak the variety of the language they would normally use in real life.

Now, you analyse a passage along the above lines.

Passage 2

The head gaoler eyed him gloomily, and looked pained when Jack Carstares with studied boorishness leaned carelessly against a fine carved table.

"We 'ave refrained from 'andcuffin' pris'ner, sir, at your horders, " he said, in a tone that warned O'Hara that should harm come of it, on his head be the blame. Sir Miles O'Hara nodded.

"Quite right," he said pleasantly, and glanced at the cloaked and masked figure before him with more suspicion than ever.

"But I regrets to 'ave to report very hobstinate be'aviour on part of pris'ner, Sir," added the gaoler impressively.

" Indeed?" said Miles gravely. "How so?"

Jack controlled an insane desire to laugh, and listened to the gaoler's complaint.

"You see the pris'ner, sir, with that great mask on 'is face? Afore we set out to come 'ere, I told 'im to take it hoff. And 'e refoosed, sir. Seeing as 'ow you gave no horders, I did not force 'im to hobey."

" Ah!... Your name, please?"

"John Smith, sir," answered Carstares promptly and hoarsely.

O'Hara wrote it down with a sceptical smile on his lips that Jack did not quite like.

1. What are the instances of dialectal variation in this passage?
2. What is the nature of the dialectal variation? What effect is created by this use of dialect?

The answers to these questions will be given later.

5.2 CHECKLIST TO STUDY TEXTS

Let us return to a more extensive discussion of stylistic effect, than mere dialectal change. In order for you to think of the appropriate features of a passage on your own, it is necessary to be aware of the variety of features one needs to consider. With this in mind, a useful Checklist is reproduced below, taken (with some modifications) from *Style in Fiction* by G.N. Leech & Mick Short, Longman, 1981.

A. Lexical categories

1. **General**: Is the vocabulary simple or complex? i) formal or colloquial? Descriptive or evaluative? General or specific?: How far does the writer make use of the emotive and other associations of words, as opposed to their referential meaning? Does the text contain i) idiomatic phrases, and if so, with what kind of dialect or register are these idioms associated? Is there any use of rare or specialised vocabulary?. Are any particular morphological

categories noteworthy (e.g. compound words, or words with particular suffixes)? To what semantic fields do the words belong?

2. **Nouns**: Are the nouns abstract or concrete? What kinds of abstract nouns occur (e.g.. nouns referring to events, perceptions, processes, moral qualities, social qualities)? What use is made of proper nouns? Collective nouns?
3. **Adjectives**: Are the adjectives frequent? To what kinds of attribute do adjectives refer? physical? psychological? visual? auditory? colour? referential? emotive? evaluative? etc. Are the adjectives gradable or non-gradable?
4. **Verbs**: Do the verbs carry an important part of the meaning? Are they stative (referring to states) or dynamic (referring to actions, events, etc)? Do they refer to movements, physical acts, speech acts, psychological states or activities, perceptions, etc? Are they transitive, intransitive, linking verbs, etc?
5. **Adverbs**: Are adverbs frequently used? What semantic functions do they perform (manner, place, duration, time, degree, etc.)? Is there any significant use of sentence adverbs (e.g. conjuncts such as *so, therefore, however*; or disjuncts such as *certainly, obviously, frankly*)?

B. Grammatical Categories

1. **Sentence Types:** Does the author use only statements (declarative sentences) or does he also use questions, commands, exclamations, or minor sentence types (such as sentences with no verb)? If these other types are used, what is their function?
2. **Sentence Complexity:** Do sentences on the whole have a simple or a complex structure? What is the average sentence length (in number of words?) What is the ratio of dependent to independent clauses? Does complexity vary strikingly from one sentence to another? Is complexity mainly due to i) co-ordination, ii) subordination, iii) parataxis (i.e. juxtaposition of clauses or other equivalent structures)? In what parts of a sentence does complexity tend to occur? For instance, is there any notable occurrence of anticipatory structure (e.g. of complex subjects preceding the verbs, of dependent clauses preceding the subject of a main clause)?
3. **Clause Types:** What types of dependent clause are favoured: relative clauses, adverbial clauses, different types of nominal clauses (e.g. that-clauses, clauses appearing as the subject of a sentence) infinitive clauses (*Vi*), *-ing* clauses (*V –ing*), *-en* clauses (*V -en* clauses), verbless clauses (*Vo*)?
4. **Clause Structure:** Is there anything significant about clause elements (e.g. the frequency of i) objects, complements, adverbials; ii) transitive or intransitive verb constructions? Are there any unusual orderings (e.g. initial adverbials, fronting of object, of complement, etc)? Do special kinds of clause construction occur (such as those with preparatory *it* or *there*)?
5. **Noun Phrases:** Are they relatively simple or complex? Where does the complexity lie (e.g. in pre-modification by adjectives, nouns, etc. or in post-modification by prepositional phrases, relative clauses, etc.). Note occurrence of listings (e.g. sequences of adjectives), co-ordination, or apposition.
6. **Verb Phrases:** Are there any significant departures from the use of the simple past tense? For example, notice occurrences and functions of the present tense; of the progressive aspect (e.g. *lying*); of the perfective aspect (e.g. *has/ had appeared*); of modal auxiliaries (e.g. *can, must, would*, etc.).
7. **Other Phrase Types:** Is there anything to be said about other phrase types: prepositional phrases, adverb phrases, adjective phrases?
8. **Word Classes:** Having already considered major or lexical word classes, we may here consider minor word classes (or function words/ parts of speech) such as prepositions, conjunctions, pronouns, determiners, auxiliaries, interjections. Are particular words of those types used for particular effect (e.g. the definite or indefinite article; first person pronouns *I, we*, etc.;

demonstratives such as *this* and *that*; negative words, such as *not, nothing, no*)?

9. **General:** Note whether any general types of grammatical constructions are used for special effect, e.g. comparative or superlative constructions; co-ordinating or listing constructions; parenthetical constructions; appended or interpolated structures, such as occur in casual speech. Do lists and co-ordinations (e.g. lists of nouns) tend to occur with two, three or more than three members?

10. **Figures of speech, etc.**: Here we consider the incidence of features which are foregrounded by virtue of departing in some way from general norms of communication by means of the language code, for example, exploitation of regularities of formal patterning, or of deviations from the linguistic code. For identifying such features, the traditional figures of speech (schemes and tropes) are often useful categories.

10.1 Schemes

Grammatical and Lexical Schemes: Are there any cases of formal and structural repetition (anaphora, parallellism, etc), or of mirror-image patterns (chiasmus)? Is the rhetorical effect of these one of antithesis, reinforcement, climax, anticlimax, etc?

Phonological Schemes: Are there any phonological patterns of rhyme, alliteration, assonance, etc.? Are there any salient rhythmical patterns? Do vowel and consonant sounds pattern and cluster in particular ways? How do these phonological features interact with meaning?

Tropes: Are there any obvious violations of, or departures from the linguistic code? For example, are there any neologisms (i.e. words coined by the writer, such as *Americanly*)? deviant lexical collocations (such as portentous infants)? semantic, syntactic, phonological, or graphological deviations?

Such deviations will often be the clue to special interpretations associated with traditional figures of speech, such as metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, paradox, irony. If such tropes occur, what kind of special interpretation is involved (e.g. metaphor can be classified as personifying, animising, concretising, synaesthetic, etc.)? Because of its close connection with metaphor, simile may also be considered here. Does the text contain any similes, or similar constructions (e.g. *as if* constructions)? What dissimilar semantic fields are related through simile?

C. Cohesion & Context:

1. **Cohesion**: (i.e. ways in which one part of a text is linked to another, e.g. the ways in which sentences are connected. This is the internal organisation of the text.)

1.1 Does the text contain logical or other links between sentences (e.g. co-ordinating conjunctions or linking adverbials)? Or does it tend to rely on implicit connections of meaning?

1.2 What sort of use is made of cross-reference by pronouns (*she, it, they*, etc), by substitute forms (*do, so*, etc) or ellipsis? Alternatively, is any use made of 'elegant variation' (i.e. the avoidance of repetition by the substitution of a descriptive phrase, e.g. '*the old lawyer*' or '*her uncle*' may be used to substitute for the repetition of an earlier *'Mr Jones'*)?

1.3 Are meaning connections reinforced by repetition of words and phrases, or by repeatedly using words from the same semantic field?

2. **Context**: (i.e. the external relations of a text or a part of a text, seeing it as a discourse presupposing a social relation between its participants (author and

reader; character and character, etc.), and a sharing by participants of knowledge and assumptions.)

2.1 Does the writer address the reader directly, or through the words or thoughts of some fictional character? What linguistic clues (e.g. first person pronouns – *I, me, my, mine*) are there of the addresser-addressee relationship?

2.2 What attitude does the author imply towards his subject? If a character's words or thoughts are represented, is this done by direct quotation (direct speech) or by some other method (e.g. indirect, free indirect speech)?

2.3 Are there significant changes of style according to who is supposedly speaking or thinking the words on the page?

By now you should be in a position to handle some extracts on your own. I shall give you some passages and lines from poetry and give you some leading questions. Please make an attempt to work through these. The answers are given at the end, but you should avoid looking at the answers till you have finished your analysis.

5.3 MORE PASSAGES

Passage 3

(S1) The Ganges though flowing from the foot of Vishnu and through Shiva's hair, is not an ancient stream. (S2) Geology, looking further than religion, knows of a time when neither the river nor the Himalayas that nourished it existed, and an ocean flowed over the holy places of Hindusthan. (S3) The mountains rose, their debris silted up the ocean, the gods took their seats on them and contrived the river, and the India we call immemorial came into being. (S4) But India is really far older. (S5) In the days of the pre-historic ocean, the southern part of the peninsula already existed, and the high places of Dravidia have been land since time began and have seen on the one side, the sinking of a continent that joined them to Africa, and on the other, the upheaval of the Himalayas from a sea.

(E.M. Forster: from *A Passage to India*)

a) Separate the main clause from the subordinate clause in S1. Which is the main clause? Which is the subordinate clause?

b) Which carries the major information? What is the major information of the sentence?

c) Analyse S2. Separate the main clause(s) from the subordinate clause(s). What meaning is conveyed by the main clause and what meaning by the subordinate clause?

d) By now are you in a position to state the main meaning of the passage?

e) Analyse the sentence construction of S3. Divide it into clauses. What do you notice about the structure? What do you notice about the meaning?

f) Comment on the use of some of the words which stand out, e.g. 'contrive', 'the India we call immemorial came into being'. How do these affect the meaning?

g) Why do you think that S4 following S3 (which is so long) is such a short sentence? What is the effect of its brevity?

h) Divide S5 into clauses, and analyse the clause structure. Comment on the parallelism in the sentence.

i) Why do we have such a long sentence again in S5? What is the effect created by its length?

j) What is the main meaning of the passage? Is it at all different from its surface meaning?

Now you analyse another passage on your own.

Passage 4

(S1) The west of Ireland, as every school boy knows, is that part of the country to which Cromwell banished the heretical natives after he had successfully brought the nation to heel. (S2) Today, it is as impoverished and barren as ever it was, bleak and lonesome and cowering from the savagery of the Atlantic which batters its coast-line with all the fury that has gathered in over three thousand miles. (S3) But the West of Ireland can also be heartbreakingly beautiful; and on a fine April morning with the smell of gorse and clover filling the air and the bees showing the only evidence of industry in a landscape that is peopleless, as far as the eye can see, on such a morning in the West of Ireland you can get a whiff of Paradise.

1. Analyse the clauses in the passage, dividing them into dependent and independent clauses, indicating the type of dependent clause. What is the effect of these clause types on the passage?

2. Which types of phrases are predominantly used?

3. Comment on the linkages between sentences/clauses

4. Discuss the use of comparison and contrast in the passage.

The answers are provided later.

ANSWERS

The following are the **answers** to questions on **Passage 2**.

1. The variation is mainly in terms of phonology, e.g.

   'to 'ave to report very hobstinate be'aviour on part of pris'ner, Sir,' '
   There are many other such instances.
   The variation is also in terms of grammar, though to a lesser extent, e.g.
   'Afore we set out'
   'I regrets to 'ave to report very hobstinate be'aviour on part of pris'ner, Sir,'"

The dialect appears to be lower class language, perhaps urban lower class language because there appears to be a court, prisoner and gaolers. The variation in dialect makes the language of the gaolers stand out in relief against the language of the others and the language of narration. It makes the gaolers seem quite distinct from the others, thereby adding local colour and authenticity of language.

ANSWERS

Now we shall look at **answers** to the questions posed on **Passage 3.**

a) Separate the main clause from the subordinate clause in S1. Which is the main clause? Which is the subordinate clause?

[The Ganges [though flowing from the foot of Vishnu and through Shiva's
MCl SCl
hair,] is not an ancient stream.]

b) Which carries the major information? What is the major information of the sentence?

The main clause. 'The Ganges is not an ancient stream' is the major proposition being put forward.

c) Analyse S2. Separate the main clause(s) from the subordinate clause(s). What meaning is conveyed by the main clause and what meaning by the subordinate clause?

[Geology, [looking further than religion,] knows of a time [when neither the

MCl RCling ACl (time)

river nor (the Himalayas [that nourished it])] existed,] and [an ocean flowed

RCl MCl

over the holy places of Hindusthan.]

The main clauses assert that Geology knows of a time when nothing existed, and an ocean flowed over the holy places of Hindusthan. The subordinate clauses indicate that knowledge can look further than religion, and mention a period of time when neither the river nor the Himalayas existed.

Notice that the main clauses deal with the factual position, and the subordinate clauses with hypothetical ideas. This indicates that the passage ultimately gives greater value to facts. Even though the religious/ mythological position is being expressed right through the passage, it is being expressed in subordinate clauses, and therefore the religious information is being subordinated to the geological.

d) By now are you in a position to state the main meaning of the passage?

The main meaning of the passage is that the scientific explanation of the geological development of India is more correct than the religious/ mythological. The mythological explanation is also given a great deal of importance, that is, it is accepted as a possible viewpoint, but the writer suggests that it cannot be considered valid, because it deviates from factual truth. This is never stated as such, however, by consistently putting the mythological viewpoint in dependent clauses, the information itself is effectively subordinated.

Forster has deliberately brought in both viewpoints, because in order to understand the nature of India, both have to be considered. To look at one alone would not give one an understanding of the complex phenomenon that is India. He has also repeatedly put both explanations in the same sentence. This indicates that he feels that the two, however opposed they may be, are inextricably interconnected. Together they provide the idea of an India that is elusive, never fully to be grasped, because it includes within itself, and as part of its essential being, contradictory ideas. This is the perspective that infuses the novel, *A Passage to India*, and makes it such a complex and insightful approach to India.

e) Analyse the sentence construction of S3. Divide it into clauses. What do you notice about the structure? What do you notice about the meaning?

[The mountains rose,] [their debris silted up the ocean,] [the gods took their
MCl MCl MCl
seats on them] and [contrived the river], and [(the India [we call immemorial])
MCl MCl RCl
came into being]]

There are 5 main clauses and one subordinate clause. Notice that the subordinate clause is a relative clause. [We can recognise that it is a relative clause because we can say 'the India that/ which we call immemorial'. The relative clause marker (that/ which/ who etc. is missing, but it relates to the preceding noun phrase 'the India'. It post-modifies it, performing an adjectival function.]

The fact that there are so many main clauses makes the sentence very easy to process. (Subordination of information in subordinate clauses makes for complexity.) But, also notice that each main clause seems to mirror the others, that is to say, they are parallel constructions. The fact of parallel constructions has its own effect. It introduces rhythm, a poetic, lyrical touch. The parallelisms build on one another and lead up to a climax.

Notice that the geological and mythological aspects are inextricably intertwined. The two opposed explanations are jointly employed to create our vision of India. Notice also the humour in 'the gods took their seats on them' (as if they were VIPs posing for a group photograph).

f) Comment on the use of some of the words which stand out, e.g. *'contrive'*, *'the India we call immemorial came into being'*. How do these affect the meaning?

The word *'contrived'* is a loaded word. The writer could easily have used the word 'created'. The choice of word suggests that the gods, like magicians, through some kind of sleight of hand, create the river. *'The India we call immemorial'* is humorous and faintly ironic.

g) Why do you think that S4 following S3 (which is so long) is such a short sentence? What is the effect of its brevity?

The short sentence, 'But India is really far older' occurs between two long sentences, and because of its positioning, makes an impact. It is a factual statement, while the two that it is sandwiched between, are a mixture of the mythological and factual, with their rolling rhythms and parallel constructions, and with their humorous, dramatic and lyrical elements. The short, pithy sentence helps to emphasise, and fairly forcefully bring out the greater importance the writer gives to the scientific explanation.

h) Divide S5 into clauses, and analyse the clause structure. Comment on the parallelism in the sentence.

[In the days of the pre-historic ocean, the southern part of the peninsula already
MCl
existed,] and [the high places of Dravidia have been land [since time
MCl ACl (time)
began]] and [have seen on the one side, the sinking of (a continent [that
MCl RCl
joined them to Africa,]) and on the other, the upheaval of the Himalayas

from a sea.]

There are many parallel constructions here.
'the Southern part of the peninsula' 'the high places of Dravidia'
'on the one side' 'on the other'
'the sinking of a continent that joined them to Africa' 'the upheaval of the Himalayas from a sea'

Notice also the parallelism between 'the high places of Dravidia' and 'the holy places of Hindusthan' in S2. This adds to the cohesion of the passage. Moreover, it does something even more interesting. The previous reference to 'holy places' imbues 'high places' which is phonologically very similar, with the quality of holiness. "High' does not remain just physical height, but becomes a moral height as well.

Notice also the lyricism of

'the high places of Dravidia have been land since time began'.

The 'high' as we have just seen has taken on some of the meaning of 'holy', and the cadence of 'have been land since time began' brings with it the suggestion of something great and glorious from the Bible.

i) Contrast the use of verbs in S2 with the use of nouns in S5.

S2 is full of dynamic verbs, namely, *rose, silted up, took, contrived, came*, of which some are more dynamic than the others. The sentence, thus, is lively, dramatic and very easy to process. S5, on the other hand, is full of noun phrases:

the pre-historic ocean,
the southern part of the peninsula
the high places of Dravidia
the one side,
the sinking of a continent,
the other,
the upheaval of the Himalayas from a sea.
Noun phrases inevitably make a sentence heavier, perhaps more analytical, more reflective.

j) Why do we have such a long sentence again in S5? What is the effect created by its length?

It has a complex role to perform, namely, to continue with the main narrative, that is the geological development of the Himalayas, while continuing to provide both types of explanations, religious and scientific. Its measured, cadenced tones give it gravity, depth, while the poetic element adds lyricism.

k) What is the main meaning of the passage? Is it at all different from its surface meaning?

On the surface, what is being dealt with is the origin of the Himalayas and the river Ganges from two different perspectives. It is possible to understand India from a scientific, technological point of view. But it is also possible to see her as mysterious, never-quite-to-be-understood fully, glimpsed only through parable and myth. The two explanations of the meaning of India just cannot be separated from each other. In order to understand India, it is necessary to consider her on from both these angles. This is its deeper meaning.

Answers to Passage 4

1. Analyse the clauses in the passage, dividing them into dependent and independent clauses, indicating the type of dependent clause. What is the effect of these on the passage?

S1. [The West of Ireland, [as every school boy knows],
MCl ACl
is (that part of the country [to which Cromwell banished the
Prep RCl
heretical natives) [after he had successfully brought the nation to heel.]]]
ACl
S2. [Today, it is as impoverished and barren [as ever it was],
MCl ACl
bleak and lonesome and [cowering from (the savagery of the Atlantic
RCling
[which batters its coast-line) with (all the fury
RCl
[that it has gathered in over three thousand miles.])])]]
RCl
S3. [But the West of Ireland can also be heartbreakingly beautiful];
MCl
and [on a fine April morning with [the smell of gorse and clover
MCl NCling
filling the air] and [the bees showing the only evidence
NCling
of industry (in a landscape] [that is peopleless)
RCl
[as far as the eye can see]]] –[on such a morning
RCl MCl
in the West of Ireland you can get a whiff of Paradise.]

Main Clauses: Five
Subordinate Clauses: Twelve
[ACl: 3; RCl: 6 (including RCling: 1; PRCling: 1) ; NCling: 2]

There is twice the number of subordinate clauses to main clauses, indicating complexity of thought. The first and last RCls (`to which Cromwell...heretical natives' ; `that is peopleless as far as the eye can see') are more than descriptive, they are also analytical. The other RCls are entirely descriptive. There are 2 instances of NCling, which are also descriptive. The 3 ACls deal with time and place, adding to the description. The passage is found to be descriptive and the clause structure supports this impression.

2. Which types of phrases are predominantly used?

There are a large number of NPs, particularly, long NPs.
e.g. `The West of Ireland',
`that part of the country to which Cromwell banished the heretical natives'.
`the savagery of the Atlantic',
`the only evidence of industry in a landscape that is peopleless as far as the eye can see'.
The NPs indicate the analysis and reflection in the passage.
There are also some AdjPs,
e.g.`impoverished and barren',
`breathtakingly beautiful'.
The AdjPs give rise to description.

3. Comment on the linkages between sentences/clauses.

Examples of linkages: `as every schoolboy knows',
`Today',
`on such a morning'
These are adverbials. The first implies that something is common knowledge, and the next two deal with contrasts based on time factors. Contrast is also signalled very clearly by the use of `But' at the beginning of S3.
'The West of Ireland' is used 3 times, instead of a word/ phrase used for elegant variation. This does not make the passage seem monotonous, as one would expect, but adds to the poetry in the passage.

The parallelisms also indicate linkage of ideas.
e.g. i) 'to which Cromwell banished the heretical natives'
'which batters its coast-line'

ii) 'impoverished and barren'
'bleak and lonesome' BUT 'heartbreakingly beautiful'

4. Discuss the use of comparison and contrast in the passage.

The passage describes the West of Ireland, on the one hand, as being `impoverished and barren' and on the other as being `heartbreakingly beautiful'. The description is built on contrasts. The relative clauses, adjectival phrases and nominals give rise to the descriptive element. The NPs introduce reflection and analysis, while the adverbials locate the scenery in time and place. Contrast is achieved partly by the time adverbials, and the prominent position given to the word `But'.

Now you analyse the following passages employing the techniques used earlier. Please turn to the Checklist from Leech & Short for ideas on what to look for. No answers are provided.

Passage 5

(S1) In the centre of the table was a small silver vase with four roses, deep red roses, tidily arranged (for James Curry was a man who loved precision) like the four points of the compass – North, South, East and West. (S2) And around this rose-pointed compass the guests were arranged. (S3) Finding the right arrangement had not been easy, but James Curry had hit on a simple solution: to put the 'talkers' opposite each other, and the 'non- talkers' between them. (S4) Like this, he was sure at least that the conversation would be directed towards the centre – towards the silver vase – and not away from it. (S5) On this basis, he had divided his guests into those who talked 'too much' and those who talked 'too little'.

1. Is the vocabulary simple or complex? Are there long sentences? Long phrases? What can you say about the nature of the passage on the basis of your answers to these questions?
2. Is this a narrative, descriptive, analytical passage? Check out your answer by analysing the clause structure of the passage. If there are a large number of noun phrases, or a large number of adverbial clauses of result, purpose, condition, it is likely to analytic, reflective. If there are a large number of relative clauses and adverbial clauses of time, place and manner, it is likely to be descriptive or narrative.
3. Look at the verb structure. What is the tense that is predominantly used? Is there any use of non-finite verbs? Remember that non-finite verbs are indicative of timelessness. Are the verbs dynamic or stative? Remember that dynamic verbs deal with action, stative verbs with states (often of the mind).

4. Which types of parts of speech are emphasised? Is there any use of adjectives?
5. Are there any instances of parallelism? Mention instances.
6. Are any figures of speech used?
7. What is the meaning of the passage? How does the language bring out its meaning? Is the surface meaning the same as its inner meaning?

You will have to work out the answers to the questions on your own.

Now, look at another passage.

Passage 6

The largest building, in the very centre of the town, is boarded up completely and leans so far to the right that it seems bound to collapse at any minute. The house is very old. There is about it a curious, cracked look that is very puzzling until you suddenly realise that at one time, and long ago, the right side of the front porch had been painted, and part of the wall – but the painting was left unfinished and one portion of the house is darker and dingier than the other. The building looks completely deserted. Nevertheless, on the second floor there is one window which is not boarded; sometimes in the late afternoon when the heat is at its worst a hand will slowly open the shutter and a face will look down on the town.

1. How many people live in this building? What is the age and sex of the face which looks down on the town in the late afternoon? How do you know?
2. Does the face belong to the owner of the house? Is the house situated in a prosperous part of the town? Is it a small town or a large city? How do you know?
3. What is the passage about?
4. Is the description objective or is the viewer in evidence?
5. What sort of an expectation does the passage arouse?
6. Comment on the sentence length of the passage. What effect does this give rise to?
7. Analyse the clause structure of the passage. What does the distribution of independent and dependent clauses tell you about the nature of the passage? What sort of dependent clauses are used? What effect do these have?
8. What sort of phrases are used most frequently? What is their effect?
9. Which types of parts of speech are used most frequently?
10. Are there any instances of parallelism?
11. Write out an analysis of this passage, based on your answers to these questions, in 2-3 paragraphs. Relate the linguistic analysis to the kind of effect created by the writer.

You will have to work out the answers to the questions on your own.

5.4 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have helped you analyse passages from prose fiction. We have given you a checklist in order to help you analyse those passages. We have given you the answers for some of the passages. We hope you will now need less and less help in analysing the passages.

5.5 KEY WORDS

dialect: a particular variety of a language spoken by the people in some geographical area (regional dialect) or in a particular social group (a social dialect)

lexical:	pertaining to words
transitive verb:	a verb which takes a direct object
intransitive verb:	a verb which does not take a direct object
parenthetical construction:	a word, phrase or sentence which interrupts a sentence and has no grammatical connection to the interrupted sentence
neologism:	a newly created word, such as (in recent years) **Internet, yuppy**
metonymy:	a figure of speech that replace the name of one thing with the name of something else closely associated with it. Eg. **the press** for *journalism*.
synecdoche:	a figure of speech by which something is referred to indirectly, either by naming only some part or constituent of it, eg. 'hands' for manual labour.
cohesion:	the presence in a text of explicit linguistic links between the various parts of the text which help to give the whole thing a clear structure.
scheme:	a term once used for a rhetorical figure of speech, usually one that departs from the normal order or sound of words but does not extend their meanings as a trope does.
trope:	a figure of speech, especially one that uses words in senses beyond their literal meaning. The major figures that are agreed upon as being tropes are metaphor, similie, metonymy, synecdoche, irony, personification, etc.

UNIT 6 ANALYSING TEXTS-III

Structure

6.0 Objectives
6.1 Extracts
6.2 Let us sum up
6.3 Key words
6.4 References

6.0 OBJECTIVES

In the previous Unit, we have analysed several passages, focusing sometimes on the context of occurrence, and sometimes on the linguistic aspects. Now, we will look at some instances of poetry, sometimes just individual lines, sometimes, short poems. We have also given you practice with some passages.

Let us work through some questions on the extract given below:

Extract/ Poem 1

The barge she sat in, like a burnished throne,
Burned on the water: the poop was beaten gold;
Purple the sails, and so perfumed that
The winds were lovesick with them...
(*Antony & Cleopatra*, II, ii, 196-97)

1. Which is the dominant consonant in the lines 'The barge...on the water'?

   Which is the dominant consonant in the lines 'the poop... purple the sails'?

   In the first case, the dominant consonant is /b/, while /n/ is the second most important. In the second case, /p/ is the dominant consonant, with /l/ as the second most important. Notice that /b/ is the voiced counterpart of /p/, both being bilabial plosives, and thus, they are very similar in sound. Notice also that /n/ and /l/ are both continuants.

2. What is the effect of these sounds on the meaning to be conveyed?

   /b/ being voiced, is much harder in quality than /p/ (voiceless) which is softer. The barge comes out, as it should, as much heavier and more solid (because of the voiced sound) than the poop and the sails (because of the voiceless sound). However, the two are integrally related, because of the similarity in kind of consonant. The continuants provide the liquid nature of the sounds. The first part appears to glisten and shine, and the second to glide and flow.

3. What information do the dominant vowels/ diphthongs provide?

   The vowels/ diphthongs used here are mainly front sounds, or central sounds, which are similar in that they are also unrounded. There are only three back vowels/ diphthongs (rounded). The rounded sounds stand out, against a strong background of vowels produced with spread lips. Strength is being suggested by the front and central sounds, and the glory of the boat by the back sounds.

4. What are these lines about?

The surface meaning is the description of a boat. The deeper meaning is that the boat and its various parts are a means of indirectly describing the occupant of the boat, namely Cleopatra. So Cleopatra is seen to be an exotic creature, full of intensity and passion. She is also delicately and lyrically feminine. All this is being suggested by the vowels and consonants used.

Notice also that all the four elements go into her composition – earth (matter, the boat); water; air (*the winds*); fire (*burned*). She is thus seen as the complete woman, a microcosm of the universe.

Now let us look at another extract:

Extract/ Poem 2

Viciousness in the kitchen!
The potatoes hiss.
It is all Hollywood, windowless. (Sylvia Plath: from 'Lesbos')

1. What is the dominant consonant here? What effect does it create?

The /s/ or /ʃ/sound, which creates the effect of the hissing of a snake.

2. Which are more prominent - the back vowels or the front vowels (including the central vowels)?

The front vowels. There are only 3 rounded sounds: (potatOEs , HollywOOd; windOWless). The front vowels create a sense of the sharp tone, the harsh, almost claustrophobic effect of the kitchen.

3. What is the meaning of the passage?

On the surface, it is about the kitchen and what is cooking. But really it is about something much deeper.

4. Who is in the kitchen?

A woman, of course. Who else?

5. Is she alone?

Yes.

6. What is her age?

Youngish.

7. What is the size of the room?

Kitchens are known to the smallest and least attractive of the rooms in an average home. And yet, the woman is expected to spend a great deal of her day there.

8. How do we know all this – it is not mentioned.

The lines seem to suggest this.

9. So, what is the real meaning?

The woman in the kitchen, who is cooking the most ordinary of vegetables, the potato, is so tired of the paralysingly humdrum nature of her life, that like the steam escaping from the potatoes on the boil, she is exploding with frustration. The room becomes even smaller and more airless than it is, because of the steam and her overflowing frustration.

10. The room is also compared with Hollywood. Why?

Hollywood is the home of illusions, where the unreal is made to pass as the real. Marriage, which seems the be-all and end-all of a young girl's existence is seen as a hoax, which promises all that is attractive – love, passion, freedom, but ends up as quite the opposite, because in fact, marriage seems to imprison the woman in the home, and particularly in the kitchen.

The lines are a blighting commentary on the life of women. It is an intensely feminist statement.

Now let us now look at a short poem.

Extract/ Poem 3

Sally in March
In the lost gardens my little daughter
Taps pond-ice with her spade.
Round her long snow-lawns turn to water
Where flocks of exiled sea-gulls wade.

In the great house sun touches dust;
Huge cupboards stir from winter sleep.
The spade breaks silence. Over the pond's crust
Peninsulas of water creep.

(Brian Cox - *Collected Poems*)

1. Analyse the consonants in the first stanza.

/n/	:	voiced alveolar nasal
/l/	:	voiced lateral approximant (other terms might also be used)
/s/	:	voiceless alveolar fricative
/t/	:	voiceless alveolar plosive
/g/	:	voiced velar plosive
/d/	:	voiced alveolar plosive
/z/	:	voiced alveolar fricative
/m/	:	voiced labial nasal
/p/	:	voiceless labial plosive
/w/	:	rounded semi-vowel (in function a consonant)
/h/	:	voiceless glottal fricative
/r/	:	voiceless post-alveolar continuant/ approximant (other terms might be used as well)

2. Which consonantal sounds predominate in this poem? What is their effect on the poem?

There is a marked use of plosives in the poem, which gives it its earthy quality. The mystery and wonder is provided by the /s/ and /z/ sounds, and the fluidity of the movement by the /n/ and /l/ sounds. The consonant sounds in the poem are limited: The same sounds occur again and again. This does not create a sense of being closed in. On the contrary, there is a sense of

space and languid movement, and in fact, the alliteration contributes to the musical harmony of the poem.

In the first stanza, voiced plosives seem to predominate, and in the second, voiceless plosives. The decisiveness of the action of the spade on the pond-ice is brought out by the voiced plosives. The voiceless plosives which seem to be slightly more frequent than voiced plosives in Stanza 2, bring in a sense of softness and mystery. This is reinforced by the sibilants which seem to pervade the poem. The laterals, nasals and /r/ make for the liquid movement of the whole.

3. Analyse the vowels in the second stanza.

front vowels: /i/ (WINter); /i:/ (sleep); /e/ (pen); /i/ (in); /a/ (peninsulAS); /i:/ (creep)

central vowels: /ʌ/ (cup) ; /ɜ:/ stir; /ə/ (winTER); /ə/ (the); /ə/ (silENCE); /ə/ (ovER); /ʌ/ (crust); /ə/ (of); /ə/ (waTER)

back vowels: /(j)u:/ (huge); /ɔ:/ (boards); /ə/ (from); /əu/ (OVer); /ɒ/ (pond's); /(j)u:/ (peninSUlas); /ɔ:/ (WATer)

ii) front-oriented diphthongs :
/ei/ (spade); /ei/ (breaks); /ai/ (SILence)

back-oriented diphthongs: none
centre-oriented diphthongs: none

4. Which type of vowels and diphthongs predominate in the WHOLE poem? What is their effect on the poem?

/æ/ (taps)
/ɒ/ (lost, pond, long, flocks, pond)
/ɔ:/ (DAUGHter, lawns, water, water)
/ei/ (spade, wade, great, spade)
/ʌ/ (gulls, sun, dust, CUPboards, crust)
/i:/ (sleep, sea, creep)
/ai/ (ice, SILence, exILed)

There seems to be an even number of prominent front, back and central vowels/diphthongs, creating a sense of well-regulated harmony. The front sounds have a certain sharpness (and sometimes length), the back sounds a roundedness, the central sounds neutrality and sometimes length. The front vowels/diphthongs give rise to a sharp distinctness in the action and the musical flow (e.g. *taps, spade, exiled, wade, spade breaks silence*). The back vowels give rise to the rounded contours of *'pond', 'snow-lawns', 'peninsulas of water'*.

5. What sort of phonological parallelism do you notice in the poem? What is its effect?

There is a great deal of alliteration and assonance in the poem. This makes for the limpid grace and musical flow of the poem. The alliteration/ assonance does not get out of control and begin to create music for its own sake. It is used only in order to express the meaning and feeling of the poem, which is the wonder and mystery of the world in springtime, located in a child's perceptions; huge spaces, emptiness, exile, now showing signs of change

6. Is there any action in the poem? What sort of action do you notice?

Human action: e.g. The child's tapping the pond-ice
Non-human action: e.g. The snow-lawns turn into water
The exiled sea-gulls wade
The sun touches dust
The cupboards stir from winter sleep
The spade breaks silence
Peninsulas of water creep

The non-human action is partly factual and partly figurative (personification) as in `cupboards stir' `The spade breaks silence', and the figurative aspect is the child's perceptions being concretised. The human action is simple and matter of fact, while the non-human action evokes wonder in the child, and it is the child's perceptions that are being expressed. The poem is concerned with capturing the wonder and mystery of a child's awakening perceptions in springtime. She can act, decisively, but in a small way. Much more momentous action is taking place all around her. The vivid verbs (*wade, touches, stir, breaks, creep*) convey the sense of languid action, of an awakening from sleep. The dynamic verb reflecting the child's action (*taps*) is the only one which is conscious and willed. The rest reflect the natural processes of the forces of life.

Now, we turn again to prose passages. As you have had plenty of practice in handling these already, analyse the following, using the questions given below.

Passage 1

As everyone knows, the movie business isn't what it used to be. For many of us who used to work at the studios, the pleasant, oversized cheques that came every Thursday have stopped. The blow fell softly mainly because when the crisis developed we couldn't believe, or didn't want to believe that it was upon us. Some of us went back to the kind of work we had done before we were brought out to Hollywood. Others, like a certain group of people I had come to know, and saw almost every week, simply stayed on, hanging.

1. Analyse the clause structure of the passage, following the lines of previous analyses. What is the impact of clause structure on the effect of the passage?

2. Comment on the stylistic features used.

The answers are given later.

Now we turn to a brief extract from *The Tempest*. Answer the questions given below. By now, you should be in a position to answer them yourself. However, the answers are given later, in any case, for you check your responses.

Extract/ Poem 4

Our revels now are ended. These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits, and
Are melted into air, into thin air:
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on; and our little life
Rounded with a sleep.

(from *The Tempest*: Act IV, Sc. I)

1. List the consonants occurring in the extract, stating the voicing, the place and manner of articulation.
2. Which type of consonants occur most frequently? What effect do these consonants have?
3. Which type of vowels/ diphthongs occur in the extract? List them in the categories: Front vowels/ front-oriented diphthongs; Central vowels/ centre-oriented diphthongs; and back vowels and back-oriented diphthongs.
4. Which type of vowels occur most frequently? What effect do they have?
5. Comment on the striking phonological features of the extract, and give examples of these features.

Answers to questions on Extract/ Poem 4

1. List the consonants occurring in the extract, stating the voicing, the place and manner of articulation.

/ð/ voiced interdental fricative
/z/ voiced alveolar fricative
/k/ voiceless velar plosive
/t/ voiceless alveolar plosive
/f/ voiceless labial fricative
/l/ voiced post-alveolar palatal
/d/ voiced alveolar plosive
/w/ semi-vowel
/s/ voiceless alveolar fricative
/p/ voiceless bilabial plosive
/r/ voiced post-alveolar fricative
/n/ voiced alveolar nasal
/m/ voiced bilabial nasal
/b/ voiced bilabial plosive
/v/ voiced labial fricative
/ə/ voiceless interdental fricative
/g/ voiced velar plosive
/d / voiced alveolar plosive

2. Which type of consonants occur most frequently? What effect do these consonants have?

Voiceless plosives and fricatives predominate. There is a sprinkling of voiced plosives and fricatives. The voiceless sounds create the atmosphere of insubstantiality, of a fairy world, and this is the primary effect, while the voiced sounds bring in the element of hard reality which is being abandoned and left behind.

3. Which type of vowels/ diphthongs occur in the extract? List them in the categories: Front vowels/ front-oriented diphthongs; Central vowels/ centre-oriented diphthongs; and back vowels and back-oriented diphthongs.

Front vowels/ diphthongs: /e/, /ei/, /i/; /æ/, /ai/; /i:/

Central vowels/ diphthongs: /ə/, /ʌ/ /eə/

Back vowels/ diphthongs: /au/, /ou/ /ɔ:/

4. Which type of vowels occur most frequently? What effect do they have?

Front vowels/ diphthongs are much more frequent than back or central, though back vowels occur in some of the important words, e.g. 'foretold',

'cloud' 'towers' 'gorgeous' 'solemnn' 'globe' 'not'. The back vowels create the impression of roundedness, of grandeur, of glory which has been conjured up by the magic of the performance. The front vowels present what the magician started with and is now being left with - bleak and thin as it is.

5. Comment on the striking phonological and other stylistic features of the extract, and give examples of these features.

a. Phonological features: Alliteration and vowel harmony

i) Alliteration

There is a fair amount of alliteration in the extract, which make for the easy flow and liquidity of the movement of lines. The lightness of the lines strengthens the notion that a magician by the wave of a hand can create an illusion and then make it fade.

e.g. cloud-capp'd; great globe; solemn temples (the /m/ sound)

ii) Foregrounding of rounded consonants

By and large, there are front and central vowels, and front and central-oriented diphthongs. These provide the background, the dissolving of the illusion. Foregrounded are the glorious things which dissolve, and each of these, 'the cloud-capp'd towers'; 'the gorgeous palaces'; 'the solemn temples'; 'the great globe itself' has at least one rounded (back) vowel/ back-oriented diphthong. The roundedness of the sounds stands out against the background of the sounds produced with spread lips (front sounds) and provides a sense of the glory of these things which are doomed to fade.

b. **Parallelisms**

e.g. These our actors As I foretold you
melted into air into thin air
the cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
the solemn temples, the great globe itself, all which it inherit

c. Pauses:

A large number of pauses occur, separating a list of objects. Because of the parallelisms and pauses, these objects are made to appear similar, or at least as those which fall into the same category, namely the category of the glorious things of this world. Individual objects like 'the cloud-capp'd towers' are made to seem as important as the larger whole which contains these, that is, 'the great globe itself'.

Answers to Questions on Passage 1

3. Analyse the clause of the passage, following the lines of previous analyses. What is the impact of clause structure on the effect of the passage?

[[As everyone knows], the movie business isn't [what it used to be]].
MCl ACl NCl
[For many of us [who used to work at the studios],
MCl RCl
the pleasant, oversized cheques [that came every Thursday]
RCl
have stopped.] [The blow fell softly], [mainly because
MCl MCl
[when the crisis developed] we couldn't believe] or [didn't want [to believe]
ACl MCl NCli

[that it was upon us]. [Some of us went back to the kind of work [we had
NCl MCl RCl
done [before we were brought out to Hollywood.]]] [Others, like a certain
ACl (Passive) MCl
group of people <[I had come [to know,]> and <[saw almost every week,]>
RCl NCli coordinate to RCl
simply stayed on, [hanging.]
ACling

Main Clauses: 7
Subordinate Clauses: 19
ACl: 3; ACling : 1; NCl: 2; NCli: 2; RCl: 5

Adverbial clauses, Noun Clauses and then, Relative clauses occur most frequently. The Adverbial (time) and Relative clauses make it descriptive, while the Noun clauses make us consider the reason why the over-sized cheques did not come in any more. The fact that there are 5 non-finite clauses adds to the abstraction and the stativeness of the passage. There is no movement or action: there is merely a discussion of the reason why such a state of affairs came into being.

2. Comment on the stylistic features used.

Parallelisms: The passage becomes interesting because of the parallelisms, which add rhythm to the lines e.g.

i. 'Some of us went back to the kind of work we had done before we were brought out to Hollywood. '
'Others, like a certain group of people I had come to know, and saw almost every week, simply stayed on'

ii. 'I had come to know'
'saw almost every week'

Phrases: Prepositional phrases are the most prominent. Of necessity, they contain Noun phrases. Prepositional Phrases introduce both an adverbial and a nominal element. Thus, there is both description as well as abstraction from a context, analysis and reflection. Within these, notice the long noun phrases, such as
'the pleasant, oversized cheques that came every Thursday'
'the kind of work we had done'

Verbs: The verbs are mainly dynamic (approx. 18), but there is an unusually large number of stative verbs as well, almost one per Main Clause (5). The dynamic verbs provide the action, while the stative verbs provide scope for abstraction, reflection. The passage provides both action and reflection. It presents the mind of the writer looking back on a situation.

Foregrounding: Foregrounded are:
The adjective *oversized*
The adverb *softly* in 'The blow fell softly'
The present participle *hanging* in the last sentence.
The use of very precise and effective words, along with the rhythmic parallelisms make the passage very readable.

Now analyse the following passage:

Passage 2

(S1) They were prancing past this hill, they were streaming to battle. (S2) Going to battle! (S3) He realized that he had not taken in precisely this thin high sensuous

breath of pleasure in close to twenty-four years, not since the first time he had gone into combat, and found to his surprise that the walk towards the fire-fight was one of the more agreeable – if stricken – moments of his life. (S4) Later, in the skirmish itself it was less agreeable – and he had perspired so profusely he had hardly been able to see through his sweat – much later, months later, combat was disagreeable, it engaged to consist of large doses of fatigue, the intestinal agitations of the tropics, endless promenades through mud, and general apathy towards whether one lived or not. (S5) But the first breath had left a feather on his memory, it was in the wind now; he realized that an odd, yes, a zany part of him had been expecting quietly and confidently for years, that before he was done he would lead an army. (S6) The lives of Leon Trotsky and Earnest Hemingway had done nothing to dispel this expectation.

(from *Armies of the Night* --Norman Mailer)

1. Look at S1. Is there any movement or action in this sentence? How does it compare, in this respect, with the rest of the sentences?

   There is plenty of action in S1, and none at all in the rest of the sentences.

2. What sort of action is there in S1? Through what part of speech is this action indicated? What can you say about it?

   There is physical movement, a very precise description of movement, created by both the use of dynamic verbs and the parallelism of clauses. The parallelism of the clauses
   'They were prancing past this hill '
   'they were streaming to battle'
   enhances the sweep of the movement. One part of the parallelism reinforces the other. It is a highly visual, almost cinematic image, which, so to speak, covers the whole screen.

3. Look at S2. There is no finite verb here. Technically it is not a sentence at all. Who is speaking? The author? The author on behalf of the character? The character himself?

   Only one non-finite verb occurs here – a present participle. Notice that the meaning would change substantially if the sentence ran, 'We were going to battle'. It would, for one thing, be impossible to put an exclamation mark after it. The sentence would become merely a mundane statement of activity The actual formulation conveys a sense of thrill and excitement, which would disappear if reformulated by using 'going' as a finite verb. This verbless sentence, which is grammatically incomplete, and therefore, incorrect, is therefore, perfectly appropriate in its context and conveys a specific meaning.

S2 is able to take us, from the full-scale vision of an army sweeping to battle presented in S1, directly into the protagonist's mind. Moreover, we enter his mind without any previous introduction to him, or through any intervention by the author, in terms of the author reporting the character's speech. So, what we have in S2 is the character's thoughts given to us directly. There is no reported speech or reported thought. It is not even the writer's interpretation of what the character thinks. It is the character's thought processes directly presented. Notice that before we even see the character we enter his mind. (In this extract we don't see the character at all.) The only objective, external activity is in S1. Thus, S2 is the writer's presentation of the character in the process of thinking. This is what is called 'free indirect speech'.

Also, look at S6. It is a comment on the protagonist's realisation that he had expected to lead an army at some stage in his life. The realisation is the protagonist's, but what about the comment? It is a wryly ironical observation. Is it made by the protagonist or the author? Is the author distancing himself from his

character by putting this in? Or is the character capable of seeing himself in perspective and mocking his own ambitions?

I think that the writer has deliberately left this question open. The comment could have been made by the character himself, because he has given plenty of evidence of his ability for self-analysis in S3, S4 and S5. But it could also very easily have been made by the author. This also, therefore, is an instance of free indirect speech, with the character's thought processes and the author's comment being inextricably linked.

4. Analyse the chronology of the passage. Write down what happened when, in its actual order of occurrence.

24 years ago: walk towards the fire-fight: An agreeable, even though stricken moment of his life.
Later in the skirmish: Events appear less agreeable
Months later: combat appeared disagreeable
Now: i. Movement of the army which he is leading (S1)
ii. The thrill of battle once again (S2)
iii. Realisation: a) had been unconsciously expecting to head an army at some stage in his career (S5)

b) Ironical realisation that he had not learned the lesson that the lives of Trotsky and Hemingway should have taught him. He should have realised from the lives of these two persons that leaders can be discarded and thrown away by an ungrateful people, and that however idealistic you might be and however skilfully you fight or command, you will not save the world. (S6)

5. Which types of phrases are prominent in the passage?

From S3 onwards the noun phrases are long and frequent, e.g.
'this thin high sensuous breath of pleasure'
'the walk towards the fire-fight'
'one of the more agreeable – if stricken – moments of his life'
'large doses of fatigue, the intestinal agitations of the tropics, endless promenades through mud, and general apathy towards whether one lived or not'
'the first breath'
'a feather on his memory'
'an odd, yes, a zany part of him'
'the lives of Leon Trotsky and Ernest Hemingway'.
The passage is light and flowing, in spite of the long noun phrases, and that is partly due to the adverbial constructions, adverbs and prepositional phrases (which have an adverbial function).

There are a large number of these prepositional phrases, e.g.:
'in close to twenty-four years'
'towards the fire-fight'
'in the skirmish itself'
'in the wind now'

6. Analyse the verbs in the passage. Contrast the verbs in S1 with those in the rest of the passage. What do they tell us about the nature of the passage?

The tense of the verbs changes in accordance with the time period referred to. S1 has the past continuous tense (to give a sense of immediacy to a story which is being told basically in the past tense). S3 has the simple past tense (the normal tense for narrating a story), which then moves into the past perfect, when the character is dealing with events further in the past. Notice that 'found to his surprise' implies 'had found'. What he found '*was*' 'one of the more agreeable...life'. '*Was*' is not in the past perfect, but in the simple

past tense, because it expresses his finding, and as this remains true for him at any time, it is stated in the tense in which he is telling the story. In S4, he seems to take the period of 24 years ago as the base line, and therefore the main verbs are in the simple past. Only the parenthetical utterance is in the past perfect – this is because the change in tense helps to differentiate the parenthesis from the regular story. In S5, the past '*had left*', '*had been expecting*' is distinguished from the present '*was*' because it is different periods of time that are being dealt with.

Notice also that many of the verbs are to do with mental activity, e.g. '*realised*' (S3 and S5), '*found*' '*had been expecting*'. The metaphor in S5, 'But the first breath... in the wind now' is also dealing with mental activity. The verb '*to be*' is very frequently used. This is the linking verb, or the verb of existence, which is also stative.

Non-finite verbs (e.g. 'engaged *to consist of*''; *'to dispel* this expectation'*)* and modals ('*would lead* an army') are also used which emphasise the stativeness of what is being presented.

7. What can you say about the other parts of speech used?

Hardly any adjectives stand out. Agreeable' occurs twice, then 'disagreable', but these are very mundane adjectives, becoming even more mundane through the repetition. The ones that stand out are: 'sensuous', 'stricken', 'intestinal', 'endless' and 'zany'. But the adjectives are not packed in. There is no sense of density of language or a richness of mosaic. The language is clear and sinuous. It is even fast-paced considering that it is dealing with mental action.

If anything, the adverbs are more prominent, but in a quiet way.
'precisely' 'so profusely' 'quietly and confidently'

8. S1 was a fairly short sentence, and S2 very short indeed. In contrast, S3 is long and S4 very long. Again S5 is fairly long, while S6 is the only sentence of average length. What can you say about sentence length in the passage?

The sentences in which the character is drawing on his memory of the past are full of dependent clauses and are very long. The other sentences are much shorter. The variation in sentence length, along with other features of the style employed make for a limpidity and flow, which is difficult to believe, given the complexity of sentences 3 and 4. Mailer is, obviously, a master of style.

9. Comment on the imagery in the passage.

There is a very strong visual image in S1 of a whole army sweeping forward to battle. The suggestion is of light-heartedness, self-confidence, and of a large contingent of the army in movement.

Subsequently, in S5 there is an image in the form of a metaphor, of a feather in the wind:
'But the first breath had left a feather on his memory, it was in the wind now'
The first breath of pleasure had made an impression on him, and this impression is now activated.

The metaphor provides a sense of lightness and a touch of poetry to his reminiscences. This enables us to get a varied picture of the man. There is the word 'prancing' used earlier, and the self-mockery in the last line, and along with the poetry of this line, we get a varied and complex image of the

man. Note that this image of the protagonist is provided without directly describing him at all.

Now read the following passage, and analyse it from the point of view of the similes used, and the effect of the similes.

Passage 3

She wanted to get out of this fixed, leaping, forward-travelling movement, to rise from it as a bird rises with wet, limp feet from the sea, to lift herself as a bird lifts its breast and thrusts its body from the pulse and heave of the sea that bears it forward to an unwilling conclusion, tear herself away like a bird on wings, and in the open space where there is clarity, rise up above the fixed, surcharged motion, separate speck that hangs suspended, moves this way and that, seeing and answering before it sinks again, having chosen or found the direction in which it shall be carried forward.

(from D.H. Lawrence: *The Rainbow*)

1. What is the predominant image in the passage?

   Of the bird. Notice that the same image is expanded on, and different aspects of the bird are seen. The woman is not visualised at all, except as a bird.

2. What are the figures of speech used?

   The **simile**, mainly. There are 3 uses of this:
   'as a bird rises...' 'as a bird lifts its breast...' 'tear herself away like a bird...'
   After this, there are no explicit similes, the woman has become the bird. The repeated similes of the woman with the bird, and the final identification of the two, make the bird **symbolic** of the woman.

3. What stylistic features support this symbolisation?

   The parallelisms which give rise to rhythm and lyricism:
   'to get out of this fixed...movement'
   'to rise from it...from the sea'
   ' to lift herself... of the sea'
   'tear herself away...bird on wings'
   'rise up ...surcharged motion'
   These support the bird image and make us accept the simile so completely that finally the bird is not just being compared to the woman, it becomes a symbol for the woman.

Now read this final passage and answer the questions given below. No answers are provided.

Passage 4

(S1) A scream, the echo of a scream hangs over that Nova Scotian village. (S2) No one hear it; it hangs there for ever, a slight stain in those pure blue skies, skies that travellers compare to those of Switzerland, too dark, too blue, so that they seem to keep on darkening a little more around the horizon – or is it around the rims of the eyes? – the colour of the cloud of bloom on the elm trees, the violet on the fields of oats; something darkening over the woods and waters as well as the sky. (S3) The scream hangs like that, unheard, in memory – in the past, in the present, and those years between. (S4) It was not even loud to begin with, perhaps. (S5) It just came there to live, for ever – not loud, just alive for ever. (S6) Its pitch would be the pitch of my village. (S7) Flick the lightning rod on top of the church steeple with your fingernail and you will hear it.

a) What do you think the passage is about? Do you think there is a real scream to be heard?
b) Is there a difference between the surface meaning and the implied meaning? What is the relationship between the surface and the implication?
c) What is likely to have caused this 'scream'?
d) Look at the passage carefully. Mark out the types of phrases that seem to occur again and again (such as Noun Phrases, Adverbial Phrases, etc.) Which types are most frequent?
e) What do you think is the effect of these phrases?
f) What can you say about the use of colour in the passage? What is the effect of the colours used?
g) Consider the similes and implicit comparisons in the passage. What is their effect?
h) There is a great deal of imagery from nature. Why has this been introduced?
i) What is the necessity of the reference to the Church?
j) Comment on the verbs used.
k) Do you notice any parallelisms in the passage? Indicate the instances of parallelism and the type of parallelism used.
l) What can you say about the length of sentences in the passage?
m) Analyse the clause structure of the passage. Are there many dependent clauses? Which predominate? What does the clause structure reveal about the nature of the passage?

Now analyse the following extract from a poem. No answers are given to the questions asked.

Extract/ Poem 5

Yes, I know all that. I should be modern.
Marry again. See strippers at the Tease.
Touch Africa. Go to the movies.

Impale a six-inch spider
under a lens. Join the Test-
ban, or become The Outsider.

Or pay to shake my fist
(or whatever-you-call-it) at a psychoanalyst.
And when I burn

I should smile, dry-eyed,
and nurse martinis like the Marginal Man.
But, sorry, I cannot unlearn

conventions of despair.
They have their pride.
I must seek and will find

My particular hell only in my hindu mind.

(from 'Conventions of Despair' – A.K. Ramanujan)

1. What are the striking features of the poem? Analyse it from the point of view of

   i) Parallelisms. List them and comment on them. Does parallelism of structure lead to parallelism of meaning?
   ii) Pauses. What is the effect of these on the tone of the extract?

iii) Vocabulary. Comment on the words used and on the introduction of the concepts, 'The Outsider' , 'Marginal Man'.

2. What is the addresser-addressee relationship?
3. State the central idea of the poem in a few words.
4. Comment on the vowels and consonants used and their effect on the poem.

I am sure that by now you will be able to work out the answers for yourself. If you go over the previous analyses, and practice this type of analysis on poems and prose extracts, you will soon become proficient at it and be able to get a great deal more out of reading literature.

6.2 LET US SUM UP

You have analysed poems, extracts of plays and passages. It is hoped that you have enjoyed working through these extracts and have got fresh insights into what goes into the making of literature. Stylistics as a tool enables us to get a precise impression of the literary work, through close analysis of the language used. It is hoped that you will continue to apply these insights in your reading of English literature.

6.3 KEY WORDS

symbolic: anything that stands for or represents something else beyond it - usually an idea conventionally associated with it.

lyricism: a fairly short piece of literature which expresses personal mood, feeling or mediation of a single speaker.

6.4 REFERENCES

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